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THE ORIGIN OF  
THE QUMRAN COMMUNITY

A dissertation  
submitted to the General Faculty Council  
Committee on Bachelor of Divinity Degrees  
in candidacy for the degree of  
Bachelor of Divinity

by

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October, 1968



Thesis  
1962-13

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

ST. STEPHEN'S THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

We, the undersigned, testify that we have read and  
recommend to the General Faculty Council for  
acceptance a thesis entitled, THE ORIGIN OF THE  
QUMRAN COMMUNITY, submitted by David Alan Beckwith, B.A.,  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree  
of Bachelor of Divinity.



#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere thanks to my parents Mr. & Mrs. Alan Beckwith, and to Miss Delilah Wennerstrom for all their help and criticism which was a great help in the production of this thesis.



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#### DIAGRAM

THE RUINS OF KHIRBET QUMRAN AFTER EXCAVATION . . . . . following page 39.  
 [This diagram is located in; Frank Moore Cross Jr., The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies (Garden City: Doubleday, 1958). Inside front cover of the book.]



## CHAPTER I

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### A Statement of Purpose

A library which was flourishing in the days of St. Paul, and which has been lost to mankind from that day to this, was accidentally discovered in 1947. It is part of what we call the "Dead Sea Scrolls." One theory after another has appeared as to the origin of these old manuscripts.<sup>1</sup> It is the purpose of this thesis to conduct an inquiry into the discoveries made in the area surrounding the Wadi Qumran. From these archeological discoveries, from what is known of the history of the times, from the manuscripts themselves, and from other documents pertaining to these discoveries, it is the writer's hope to posit a working hypothesis concerning the authorship of these manuscripts.

#### The Story of the Discoveries of the Dead Sea Scrolls

Much mystery and intrigue surrounds the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The reason for this is the fact that the first discoveries were not made by archeologists. Rather, they were made by Bedouins and others who were interested in the discoveries for purely monetary gains.

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<sup>1</sup>The reader should note that all literary finds in the Great Rift Valley/the Jordan River system are labelled by modern scholars as "Dead Sea Scrolls." This Thesis, however, is concerned only with the eleven Khirbet Qumran caves that yielded written materials to the archeologist.



This fact makes it difficult to obtain truth from speculation.<sup>2</sup>

Millar Burrows was in Palestine at the time of the initial discoveries lecturing at the American School of Oriental Research. From the scattered evidence available, it would seem safe to say that the first discoveries of many of the important scrolls were made in either January or February of 1947. The discoverer of the first scrolls was a fifteen-year-old boy from the Taamireh tribe of Bedouins whose tribal pasturage remains in the Jeshimon of Judah (between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea). The story goes that he was herding a flock of sheep and goats, when one of the goats strayed. At that time, the boy, Muhammad Adh-Dhib, was in the area of the Wadi Qumran, near the shore of the Dead Sea, where he thought the lost goat had jumped into a cave. The story continues that the young boy threw a rock into the cave expecting to hear a thud as the stone landed, but instead heard the sound of breaking pottery. Another version of the story relates that Muhammad Adh-Dhib and two companions took refuge in the cave during a thunderstorm. The cave is located about five miles south of the northwest corner of the Dead Sea, and about a mile and a quarter back

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<sup>2</sup> J.M. Allegro has written about the original discoveries, but as he has already been accused of conjecture by competent scholars, and has admitted the same concerning the connection of Jesus of Nazareth with the Teacher of Righteousness; his account of the discoveries must only be accepted after being compared with the accounts given by other competent scholars; Edmund Wilson also wrote the story of the discoveries in The New Yorker, with the usual journalistic mixing of fact. The damage done by him is still being repaired.



from the shore. It is within a mile from the previously discovered ruins of Khirbet Qumran.<sup>3</sup> The story from here is not easy to follow. Somehow, Muhammad Adh-Dhib and some friends entered the cave and removed scrolls of leather which were wrapped in linen cloths. These scrolls were taken to Bethlehem, to a Muslim sheikh who noticed that the writing upon the scrolls was not Arabic. Assuming it was Syriac, he sent the boys to see a merchant member of the Syrian Orthodox (Jacobite) community in Bethlehem.<sup>4</sup> His name was Khalil Eskander. Eskander informed the Metropolitan - Archbishop, Athanasius Yeshue Samuel, of the discovery. Khalil Eskander and George Isaiah brought one of the scrolls to the Syrian Orthodox Monastery of St. Mark and showed it to Archbishop Samuel. The Archbishop recognized the writing as Hebrew. He told the merchants that he would buy the scrolls.<sup>5</sup> In the end, the Archbishop bought two-thirds of the scrolls. (The other one-third belonged to one of the Bedouins, who decided to look elsewhere for a buyer when the Archbishop procrastinated.) This other one-third is probably the portion that Professor Sukenik acquired in November 1947 for the Hebrew University. As a consequence the Archbishop

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<sup>3</sup>c.f., post, Chapter II, pp. lff.

<sup>4</sup>J.M. Allegro says that it was the practice of these Bedouins to smuggle goods to Bethlehem.

<sup>5</sup>It should be remembered that the reason there is so much uncertainty about the details of the initial discovery arises from the fact that technically these scrolls were illegally excavated and should not have been sold without the Jordanian government's approval.



purchased five scrolls. The Manual of Discipline (in two parts), the great manuscript of Isaiah (Isaiah "A"), the Commentary of the book of Habakkuk (indeed an important book for a study of the origin of the authors), and a badly decomposed scroll in Aramaic, which was at first described as the lost book of Lamech, were bought by the Archbishop. The Aramaic scroll has now been opened and was given the title of "A Genesis Apocryphon".<sup>6</sup> Trouble began when George Isaiah and others persuaded the Bedouins to show them the cave. Illegal excavations took place. They were not done by competent archeologists; they were done by people anxious only to make money. Thus many valuable facts were lost to archeologists by this illegal ransacking of Cave I. Archbishop Samuel now began to show his possessions to scholars. Stephon Hamnah Stephon was consulted; but his field was Arab History and so his pronouncement that the scrolls were worthless was probably due to general skepticism. It was Father J.P.M. van der Ploeg at the Dominican Monastery of St. Stephen who made the identification of the Isaiah Scroll. The Archbishop showed the scrolls to other scholars including Toviah Wechsler who claimed the scrolls were worthless.

At this time, the late Dr. E.L. Sukenik, Professor of Archaeology at the Hebrew University returned home from America. On November 29, 1947 he bought the remaining scrolls from the Bedouins and two pottery jars in which the Bedouins claimed to have found the scrolls.

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<sup>6</sup>The mistaken identity occurred when Dr. J.C. Trever, of the American School of Oriental Research, detached one column of the scroll and saw references to Lamech and his wife. It was later found to be an Aramaic retelling of Genesis.



The following day, the General Assembly of the United Nations passed the fateful resolution recommending the partition of Palestine. It was welcomed by the Jews, but hated by the Arabs. Communication between the two groups became impossible.

In December of 1947, Sukenik heard of the collection of scrolls by Archbishop Samuel. After incurring many difficulties a representative of the Archbishop and Sukenik met at the Y.M.C.A. located in Military Zone B. The meeting was held, and Sukenik recognized the scrolls of the Archbishop as belonging to the same collection that he had. Negotiations were undertaken for the purchase of the Archbishop's scrolls. Meanwhile, Archbishop Samuel was making his own arrangements to let the scholars at the American School of Oriental Research see the scrolls. Contact was made with Dr. John C. Trever and shortly thereafter the scrolls were photographed.

It is from this point that we may say that serious study of the scrolls was begun. Some of the photographs were sent to Dr. W.F. Albright to obtain his judgement on the nature and age of the manuscripts. Albright said that, according to his comparison with other pre-Christian fragments, and on the basis of the script, he would date the scrolls to be from the first or second century B.C.

On the afternoon of March, 1948, a class in epigraphy at the American School of Oriental Research began the serious study of the Habakkuk Commentary.

The story of the original finds continued with much intrigue and infamy. However, it is not the purpose of this thesis to delve into this detective story. The major finds of Cave I are now in the



hands of respectable scholars. The Archbishop's collection of the scrolls was purchased by the Government of Israel early in 1954. The announcement of their purchase came on February 13, 1955.

It was at the end of January, 1949 that Cave I was found by scholars after persuading the Bedouins to show them the location of the cave. From February 15 to March 5, 1949 headed by G.L. Harding and Roland de Vaux the cave was excavated. At that time, these two men briefly inspected the nearby ruins of Khirbet Qumran. A further series of manuscripts were found. The most important of which is the so-called "Book of Rules" with the appended songs of praise. Fragments were also found in the cave.

While archaeologists were starting their excavations of Khirbet Qumran in 1951, Bedouins from a region nine miles south of Qumran, offered new manuscripts for sale. In the period of January 21 to March 3, 1952, four caves were investigated in the Wadi Murabba'at. These finds have no actual connection with Qumran. These caves were used especially during the Bar Cochba revolt in 132 A.D. A letter was found bearing the signature of Bar Cochba.

In the spring of 1952, the Ta'amireh Bedouins discovered Cave II of Qumran. From March 10 to 29, 1952, archaeologists systematically excavated the entire area of Qumran; and on March 14, 1952, they discovered Cave III of Qumran in which two copper scrolls were found.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The copper scroll is actually one scroll in two pieces. It is a badly written work listing various locations for treasures of unbelievable wealth.



In September, 1952, the same Ta'amireh Bedouins discovered Cave IV; which is a man-made cave hollowed out of soft marl, located at the point where a ravine joins the Wadi Qumran at the back of the cliffs overlooking Khirbet Qumran. During September 22 to 29, 1952, excavations were carried on in Cave IV, which has proven to be the richest of all the caves yet discovered.<sup>8</sup> Caves V - XI were discovered between September 22, 1952, and February, 1956.

#### A Catalogue of the Library of Qumran

##### Cave I

This cave contained the most complete manuscripts of any cave.

###### (a) The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>)

This is a scroll of leather one foot wide and twenty-four feet long, made of leather strips sewed end to end. It was remarkably well preserved, though worn by much use. The Hebrew text, written in fifty-four columns is still clearly legible. The Hebrew text is written in the square or Aramaic alphabet, the form of which is of the type found in Palestinian inscriptions the century before Christ. It contains variations to the traditional text of Isaiah, some of which are important for scholars of lower criticism.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Cave IV contains the greatest number of manuscripts of all the caves yet discovered. Portions of over three hundred different manuscripts have been found which would indicate that this cave stored the main library of the Qumran Community. However, while it may be the richest find in terms of actual written words, none of the manuscripts are complete.

<sup>9</sup>The Great Isaiah Scroll was discovered in time to be used in writing the Revised Standard Version of the Old Testament published in 1952.



(b) A fragmentary Copy of Isaiah (1QIsa<sup>b</sup>)

This is not a complete copy. This scroll was not opened for sometime after its discovery because of its tightly compressed nature. When it was unrolled, it was found to contain one large piece, and several smaller pieces. The scroll itself is in a highly deteriorated condition. So much so, that the writing was only legible by means of infra-red photography. The large piece contains chapter thirty-eight of Isaiah to the end with some gaps. The smaller pieces contain chapters ten and thirteen, chapters nineteen to thirty, and chapters thirty-five to forty. It agrees closely with the Masoretic text of later manuscripts (unlike 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>).<sup>10</sup>

(c) The Commentary of the Book of Habakkuk (1QpHab).

This scroll is very important to this thesis because it contains veiled references to the origins of the Qumran Community and to the Teacher of Righteousness. The scroll is about five feet long, although when it was written it was probably about six or seven inches longer. It is only five and a half inches wide. Scholars estimate that its original width was around seven inches. The Hebrew script indicates a later date than that of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>.

The method of the commentary is to quote a few words from the text of the Book of Habakkuk. For example, in the sixth verse of the first chapter, it quotes from scripture, "for lo, I am raising up the

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<sup>10</sup> For a full discussion of this subject, see, Millar Burrows, The Dead Sea Scrolls (New York: Viking Press, 1955), pp. 303-15.



Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation"; then the comment is, "this refers to the Kittim, who are indeed swift and mighty in war, bent on destroying people far and wide and subduing them to their own domination."<sup>11</sup> Who are these Kittim? This will be important later for establishing the age of the text, and therefore a possible idea as to the origins of the community. Finally, there is a passage in this book which has probably aroused more controversy than any of the others. In the second half of verse thirteen, chapter one, of Habakkuk one reads, "why do ye look on faithless men, but thou art silent at the swallowing by the wicked man of one more righteous than he?"<sup>11</sup> The comment comes back:

This means the house of Absalom and the men of their party, who kept silence at the chastisement of the teacher of righteousness, and did not help him against the man of lies, who rejected the law in the midst of their whole congregation.<sup>12</sup>

Much speculation has been aroused concerning the identification of the Teacher of Righteousness, the man of the lie, and concerning the house of Absalom. These questions are vital in any arguments to ascertain the origins of the community. Consideration of this passage in more detail will be found in chapters four and five of this thesis.

#### (d) The Manual of Discipline (1QS)

This name was given to the two scrolls (originally one) by Millar Burrows.<sup>13</sup> He named it after the Methodist Manual of Discipline,

<sup>11</sup> Burrows, The Dead Sea Scrolls, op. cit., p. 367.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> It is uncertain if the scrolls were broken by the Bedouins or were broken when they were found.



because of the nature of the writings contained in the scrolls. The two pieces make a scroll of a little more than six feet long. (The original was probably about seven feet long.) The width is nine and one-half inches. It shows no signs of hard wear and it has suffered little from the ravages of time. The lack of unity and logical order in the book indicates that it was probably compiled gradually over a period of time.

The Manual of Discipline begins by saying what is expected of those who enter into the covenant. Ceremonies of entrance to the community follow, then other liturgical rules. A section then follows dealing with sin. It closes with a devotional hymn.

(e) A Genesis Apocryphon (1QApoc)

This was originally called the Lamech Scroll. It was found in poor condition. It was brittle and hard; and in places, the leather seems to have formed a natural glue. The scroll was unrolled with great difficulty in the last months of 1955. It was published in 1956, under the title of "A Genesis Apocryphon." Scholars were mistaken when they originally identified it as the lost book of Lamech.<sup>14</sup> The scroll consists of stories (Midrashic exegesis) told from the Book of Genesis. The most remarkable thing about this book is that ascholars have for the first time an extended text in a dialect of Aramaic used by the Jews in Palestine at the time of Jesus.

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<sup>14</sup> This occurred when small bits of the outside of the scroll had come loose and were read. It contains references to Lamech and his wife. Cf., Ante, p. 4 , footnote no. 6..



(f) The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light with  
the Sons of Darkness (1QM)

This scroll has been almost entirely preserved, with the exception that the bottom edge is badly eaten away. It is nine feet long and six inches wide. The document consists of instructions for the war between the Sons of Light (the tribes of Levi, Benjamin, and Judah) and the Sons of Darkness (Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines, and Greeks). It is still a matter of scholarly debate whether or not the war contemplated is an actual conflict at the time or is to be an eschatological war in the future.

(g) A Collection of Psalms (1QH)

These were delivered by the Bedouins in four pieces. There are about twenty psalms which in language, echo that of the Bible. They may be compared with the Psalms of Solomon, which were written circa 50 B.C.

This is the collection of extant works taken from Cave 1. These are in addition to these seven basic works about seventy fragments. The major fragments concern the book of Daniel.<sup>15</sup>

Cave IV

Cave IV was the next cave discovered which contained manuscripts of any major importance. The manuscripts found in cave four are in an

<sup>15</sup> A full account of the finds from Cave I may be found in the book, by D. Barthelemy, J.T. Milik, et. al., Qumran, Cave 1, Discoveries in the Judean Desert I, (Oxford, 1955).



advanced state of decay. It is reported that some are so brittle that they can scarcely be cleaned with the touch of a camel's hair brush.<sup>16</sup> The major portion of the fragments were removed from the cave by Bedouins before archaeologists reached the cave. Most of these manuscripts were purchased by the Department of Antiquities of the Government of Jordan. Later, private individuals were allowed to purchase these scrolls, provided they left the scrolls in Palestine until the editing of them was completed. The scrolls from Cave IV are at best large fragments. They number in the thousands. An international team of scholars is still at work sorting the manuscripts into their various groups and respective scrolls. The work is laborious and exhausting.

Thus far, these are the important manuscripts found.

(a) A manuscript of Samuel (4QSam<sup>a</sup>). A total of forty-seven of the fifty-seven columns is preserved in fragmentary form.

(b) An extensive group of fragments entitled 4QNum<sup>b</sup>. The main interest of this text is that it takes a middle position between the Old Samaritan and Old Greek texts.

(c) Three master scrolls which were imported into Qumran at the founding of the community. They included fragments of an old copy of Samuel, a worn section of Jeremiah (4QJer<sup>a</sup>), and a copy of Exodus (4QEx<sup>f</sup>) in a very fragmentary form. The Samuel Scroll can be dated no later than 200 B.C.

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<sup>16</sup>Frank Moore Cross Jr., The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies (Garden City: Doubleday, 1958), p. 26.



(d) A copy of Daniel, inscribed in the script of the late second century B.C., has been found. This is a thrilling discovery because it would be no more than fifty years younger than the autograph.

(e) Biblical commentaries on the Psalms, Hosea, Isaish, and Nahum. The most important of these is the commentary on Nahum because of its direct references to historical persons.

(f) Other fragments of Biblical and Sectarism writings. These manuscripts date from the third century B.C. to 68 A.D.

#### Cave VI

This cave contained mostly small fragments, the only one of importance to this thesis is a fragment of the so-called Damascus Document.

#### Cave XI

The full details of this find have been published.<sup>17</sup> There are at least five complete scrolls like those of cave I. There is a beautifully written scroll of a part of the book of Leviticus; an Apocalypse of the New Jerusalem, a scroll of Psalms; and an Aramaic Targum of Job.<sup>18</sup> These finds are a paramount importance.

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<sup>17</sup> For full details of the finds of Cave XI, see, J.A. Sanders, "Cave II Surprises and the Question of Canon", in McCormick Quarterly, XXI (March, 1968), pp. 284-298.

<sup>18</sup> Cross, op. cit., p. 26. It is reported that this Targum of Job was condemned by Rabbi Gamaliel (the teacher of St. Paul).



This to date completes a summary of the finds of scrolls in the area of Wadi Qumran. Whether or not the discoveries have come to an end only time will tell.<sup>19</sup>

#### The Damascus Document

The Damascus Document in fragmentary form, was discovered in 1898 in a genizah in Old Cairo. Its importance has recently been amplified with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and especially with the discovery of the Manual of Discipline. These fragments were parts of either two or three manuscripts. Two of the pieces appear to have been written in the same script ( $A_1$  and  $A_2$ ). Millar Burrows claims these were originally parts of the same manuscript.<sup>20</sup> The third fragment ( B ) is different and appears to be somewhat later. In many places the two manuscripts run parallel but there are variations.

The document seems to be put together in a "scrapbook" fashion; i.e., the subjects do not follow each other in a logical order. A. Rubinstein has distinguished three parts to this document. He finds the three portions are of different dates. The first and earliest part is the "historical-admonitory"; the second is the "camp rules", which he believes were developed at a time when the covenanters were in camps;

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<sup>19</sup>

The finds in the caves 2,3,5, etc., have not been dealt with as they are of little importance to this thesis.

<sup>20</sup>

Millar Burrows, The Dead Sea Scrolls, op. cit., p. 193.



and a third, which he finds bisects section two, contains urban laws designed for urban dwellers of the community.

The connection between the Damascus Document and the Dead Sea Scrolls has been known since the first reading of the scrolls in 1948. As has already been mentioned, fragments of the Damascus Document have been found in Caves IV and VI of the Dead Sea Community. However, it is also possible to show literary connections between the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Damascus Document.

In both the Habakkuk Commentary (1QPHab) and in the Damascus Document we find mention of "the Teacher of Righteousness", "the Man of the Lie", and "the Preacher of the Lie". The words "new covenant" also appear in both texts. In addition there are several distinctive terms that appear in the Damascus Document and in the Manual of Discipline; e.g., rank, order, and purity (applied to sacred food). When introducing new sections we find the characteristic phrase, "and this is the order for". The phrase "the dominion of Belial" and "the lot of Belial" are also characteristic of both. The most striking relationship, however, is in the extended passages which appear nearly identical in both the Damascus Document (C D) and in the Manual of Discipline (1QS).<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>

The letters C D stand for "Cairo Damascus Document".



(1QS) . . . And to love all that he has chosen and hate all that he has rejected, to be far from all evil and cleave to all good works, and to do truth and righteousness and justice in the land; to walk no longer in the stubbornness of a guilty heart and eyes of fornication.<sup>22</sup>

(CD) And now, my sons, listen to me, and I will uncover your eyes to see and understand the works of God, and to choose what he likes and reject what he hates; to walk perfectly in all his ways, and not to go about with thoughts of a guilty impulse and eyes of fornication.<sup>23</sup>

(1QS) . . . He shall reprove him and shall not bring upon him iniquity; and also a man shall not bring against his neighbor a word before the masters without having rebuked him before witnesses.<sup>24</sup>

(CD) You shall reprove your neighbor, lest you bear sin because of him . . . any man of those who enter the covenant who brings a charge against his neighbor without having rebuked him before witnesses.<sup>25</sup>

(1QS) And in every place where there shall be ten men of the council of the community there shall not be absent from them a priest.<sup>26</sup>

(CD) And in a place having ten there shall not be absent a priest learned in the book of HGW.<sup>27</sup>

Apart from literary similarities, there are also ideological similarities. Most noteworthy of these is a preoccupation with Aaron

<sup>22</sup> Burrows, Dead Sea Scrolls, op. cit., p. 189.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 190.

<sup>27</sup> Further examples may be found in Millar Burrows, The Dead Sea Scroll, pp. 189-190.



and the Sons of Zadok, and a Messiah which is to come from the priestly family of Aaron instead of from the royal tribe of Judah.

Differences are also worth noting:

(CD) reads coming into the covenant congregation or association <i>לְוִיּוֹת</i>	while (1QS) reads passing into the covenant community
settlement	<i>לְוִיּוֹת</i> means "a session of the group". <sup>28</sup>

The Damascus Document in its list of people; i.e., priests, Levites, and sons of Israel adds the proselyte which is not mentioned in the Manual of Discipline. Burrows feels that these differences indicate to us that these two documents came from the same general religious movement, but probably not from the same stage in its history.<sup>29</sup>

The question of the date of writing the Damascus Document will be important in considering the conclusions to be drawn from this document. Two questions should be considered. First, is the Damascus Document earlier or later than the Dead Sea Scrolls? And when was this document written? To begin, the Damascus Document must be earlier than 70 A.D., owing to the fact that fragments are found in the caves of the

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., pp. 190-192. Burrows gives an interesting discussion of the differences.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 191.



Wadi Qumran; and secondly, it makes references to the temple which was destroyed about that time. Assuming that the Damascus Document came into existence about the same time as the rest of the Dead Sea Scroll, we may proceed by looking at the historical allusions present in the documents, and thus try to fit the Damascus Document into the times of its writing. L. Rost considers the Damascus Document to be older than the Commentary of the Book of Habakkuk because, the persecution and suffering of the Teacher of Righteousness are not yet known in the Damascus Document, while they are known in the Commentary of the Book of Habakkuk. Agreeing with Dupoint-Sommer, Rost believes the Habakkuk Commentary was written about 50 B.C. Rost then dates the Damascus Document some time before that. Rost believes that the "Unique Teacher" found only in the Damascus Document is the founder of the sect, while, the Teacher of Righteousness came after him. Thus, he continues, if the Unique Teacher was dead more than forty years, his death must have occurred about 100 B.C. Thus Rost dates the Damascus Document about 60 B.C. at the beginning of the Roman period. These arguments are based on the following passage in the Damascus Document.

And from the day of the gathering in of the unique teacher until the annihilation of all the men of war who returned with the man of the lie will be [or was] about forty years.

Therefore, Rost could be quite correct in his position. Another passage in the Damascus Document speaks of those "who give heed to the voice of a Teacher of Righteousness." This shows that the Teacher of



Righteousness could very well be alive at the time of writing. This assumption of course depends upon the time given to the origin of the community, but it is enough for now to state that Rost is giving a date close to what most scholars agree. What is most important is the argument that the Damascus Document is previous to the Habakkuk Commentary.<sup>30</sup> F.M. Cross, Jr. considers, along with Millar Burrows, that the Damascus Document was written about 100 B.C., or a little earlier.<sup>31</sup> Their arguments are based like Rost on the historical allusions present in the writings.

### Conclusion

This then is the story of the discoveries in the area of Wadi Qumran. When the scrolls were first discovered, there were those people who called them a forgery; but as we shall soon see, they are one of the most important archaeological discoveries of the century. The scrolls are important for the scholar of Hebrew paleontology, for here we have examples of Hebrew script dating back as far as 300 B.C. The scrolls are important for the student of Lower Criticism of the Bible, for they provide us with texts of the Old Testament which are

<sup>30</sup> The theory that Rost holds; viz., that the Unique Teacher of the Damascus Document is different from the Teacher of Righteousness of the Habakkuk Commentary, is not held by the writer and other scholars. However, his argument that the "teacher" was still alive at the time of writing of the Damascus Document is very good.

<sup>31</sup> Cross, op. cit., pp. 57 ff.



over one thousand years older than any other existing manuscript-texts before the Masoretes fixed the Text and the Canon. Also these discoveries throw much light on a pre-Christian Jewish Sectarian group called the Essenes.<sup>32</sup> Here we have a record of a Jewish Sectarian group which was in existence during the life of Jesus. Anything which gives us a better understanding of the milieu out of which Jesus came enables us to understand his message better.

In this chapter, we have considered the original findings which started a great revival of interest in Biblical archaeology. In the next four chapters, we must look at the community which wrote the scrolls, the historical milieu from which they evolved, the historical allusions in their writing, and finally state a theory as to the origins of this group. Ultimately, the desire is to find out why this group should retire into the desert and develop their own isolated community; i.e., what can be discovered as to the origin of the Qumran Community?

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<sup>32</sup> For a different opinion, see, G.R. Driver, The Judean Scrolls (Oxford: Blackwell, 1965), pp. 100-119.



## CHAPTER II

### THE RUINS OF KHIRBET QUMRAN

#### An Archaeological History of Khirbet Qumran Prior to 1947

Pliny, the elder, the author of Historia Naturalis has left us a useful description of the area near Khirbet Qumran. After mentioning the Dead Sea and its eastern shore, he comes to describe the Essenes who lived on the western shore.

On the west coast of Lake Asphaltitis, (i.e., the Dead Sea) are settled the Essenes, at some distance from the noisome odours that are experienced on the shore itself. They are a lonely people, the most extraordinary in the world, who live without women, without love, without money, with the palm trees for their only companions. But they maintain their numbers, for recruits come to them in abundance, men who are wearied of life or driven by the changes of fortune to adopt their way of living. And so, through countless ages, hard though it is to believe, this people among which no children are born has survived. Others who feel repentance for their lives become their children. Lower down (*infra hos*) than the Essenes was the town of Engada ('Ain Gedi) which in the fertility of its soil and its palm groves was surpassed only by Jericho,<sup>1</sup>but which today is reduced like it (Jericho) to a heap of ashes. Then comes the fortress of Masada in the mountains, it too at some distance from Lake Asphaltitis.<sup>2</sup>

Father Milik and Father Roland de Vaux both argue that this passage from Pliny refers specifically to Khirbet Qumran.

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<sup>1</sup>J.T. Milik, Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaea (London: SCM Press, 1959), p. 44. The reader is referred to Father Milik's footnote which reads, "The manuscripts read 'Jerusalem'; this is obviously a scribal error, since the reference to palm-groves can only apply to Jericho.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 44-45.



Father Milik argues thus:

(a) Pliny is alluding to the condition of Palestine after the First Jewish Revolt, as we see from the end of his account. However, the Essene settlement was destroyed during this revolt. Apparently, this mixing of contemporary information with anachronistic details is not unique in Pliny.

(b) Broadly speaking, the details provided by Pliny about the Essenes correspond to those of Josephus and Philo.

(c) But Philo and Josephus describe mainly the Essene communities scattered in the towns and villages of Palestine. Pliny alone attaches importance to the settlement west of the Dead Sea, some distance from the shore and north of 'Ain Gedi.

(d) In Pliny the preposition "infra" always means "down stream", and that for the classical writers and the others of the Talmud, the Dead Sea was a continuation of the Jordan. Therefore, 'Ain Gedi was downstream from the Essenes' site. The ruins of Qumran are virtually the only remains of any importance between 'Ain Gedi and Jericho.

And Milik finds that the ruins of Khirbet Qumran also agree with his remark about "at some distance from the shore".<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 45



This view is an interesting one which cannot be completely proved nor yet be disproved. Millar Burrows is not too impressed with Milik's argument. Burrows feels that there were many Essene settlements in the area of the Dead Sea; and that not too much faith can be put on the linguistic argument of the preposition "infra".<sup>4</sup> Be that as it may, it is altogether possible that Pliny the elder was describing the Qumran Community.

During the nineteenth century, the explorer E. de Saulay gave a brief description of the Qumran ruins, but he thought they were the remains of the biblical Gomorrah. M. de Saulay thought this, no doubt, because the local Arabs pronounce "q" as "g" and therefore Qumran is heard as Gumran. C. Clermont-Ganneau studied the ruins more closely excavating a few graves without reaching any conclusion. In this century G. Dolman recognized a Roman Fort in the ruins and as we shall see later he was not completely mistaken. F.M. Abel thought the tombs belonged to an early Moslem sect.<sup>5</sup>

As we can see, very little was done to excavate the site of Khirbet Qumran before 1947. It was the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls that gave the incentive to explore the ruins of Khirbet Qumran.

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<sup>4</sup> Millar Burrows, More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls (New York: Viking Press, 1958), p. 264.

<sup>5</sup> Milik, op. cit., pp. 45-46.



### An Archaeological History of Khirbet Qumran After 1947

The first modern exploration of the site of Khirbet Qumran took place in 1949, when G.L. Harding and Father Roland de Vaux briefly inspected the ruins while excavating the nearby cave. They found nothing that indicated any connection between the ruins and the manuscripts from the nearby caves. Thus the common belief that the ruined building had been a small Roman Fortress still seemed probable. Paul Kahle was not satisfied with this view. At the annual meeting of the Society for Old Testament Study in January of 1951, Kahle called for an adequate excavation of the ruin.

The first excavation took place from November 24th to December 12, 1951. The main building about one hundred and eighteen feet long and ninety-four feet wide was uncovered at the southwestern and northeastern corners. In the southwestern corner of the building, three rooms, with walls preserved to a height of about nine feet, were cleared. In the largest of these rooms was found a carefully plastered bench about eight inches high. There was also a small plastered area forming a kind of basin just outside this corner of the building. Two rooms were excavated at the northeastern corner: one was a corner room and the other an outside room built along the north wall of the building.

Bronze coins were found in nearly all the rooms. The dates of the coins ranged from the beginning of the Christian era to the time of the First Jewish Revolt. From this information, one could surmise that the building had been in use during the first seventy years of the first century A.D. The occupation came to an end about seventy A.D. during the First Jewish Revolt.



Large amounts of pottery were also found conforming to types found elsewhere in tombs from the time of Herod The Great and the first century A.D.

One of the most significant finds was a complete jar of the same type as those in which the manuscripts had been deposited in Cave I. This jar was probably used for the storage of food materials. The results of these excavations proved that the caves and the ruins were connected. The excavation showed that by their plan of construction that the ruins belonged not only to a Roman fort, as had been previously thought for so many years. The excavation of the cemetery showed that the building could not have housed all the people buried there. It is likely that they lived in the surrounding tents or caves and used the building as a meeting place.

The second excavation of the site was carried out by Harding and de Vaux from February 9 to April 24, 1953. This excavation's major importance is that it tells us the dates and the number of occupations of the site of Khirbet Qumran. There were four basic occupations of the site for the period of the building.

Phase Ia was a period of temporary occupation of the site while the community was organizing. It would appear that it lasted from about 130-100 B.C. It left little archaeological evidence other than a coin record, because of the temporary nature of the building structures.

Phase Ib was ended by an earthquake: most likely the earthquake Josephus tells us occurred in the seventh year of the reign of Herod the



Great (37-4 B.C.); i.e. just before the Battle of Actium (31 B.C.).<sup>6</sup>

This assumption de Vaux makes, mainly because coins found on the site were of the Seleucid King, Antiochus Sidetes (138-128 B.C.); and of the Hasmonean rulers John Hyrcanus (135-104 B.C.), and Alexander Janneus (103-76 B.C.). Any other recorded earthquakes were either too early or too late to fit in with the evidence of the coins. The pottery found at this level belonged to the late Hellenistic period. Other coins indicate that the first occupation of the site carried on down to the end of the Hasmonean period, or to the reign of Herod the Great. The ruins indicate a severe earthquake ended the occupation. The earthquake line runs along the southeast end of the building and drops twenty inches.<sup>7</sup>

The main building was two stories and was erected not later than the reign of Alexander Janneus (103-76 B.C.). It could well have been erected as early as the rule of John Hyrcanus (135-104 B.C.).<sup>8</sup> The coins became more numerous from the time of Herod's son, Archelaus (4 B.C.- 6 A.D.), and again more numerous still up until the time of the First Jewish Revolt (68-70 A.D.). This would also indicate that the building was not immediately restored following the earthquake. It would also appear that the same group which restored the site build the original buildings, because the same general plan and manner of use were continued.

<sup>6</sup> Josephus, Antiquities, XV:V:1.

<sup>7</sup> Millar Burrows, Dead Sea Scrolls (New York: Viking Press, 1955), pp. 65ff.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 65.



The pottery from this second period of occupation corresponds with pottery found elsewhere in tombs from the time of Herod the Great. Also, the pottery from this level corresponds to that found in the first cave which de Vaux dates from the first half of the first century.<sup>9</sup>

From the upper story of the building, portions of what proved to be, when assembled, a brick table about sixteen feet long and about twenty inches high, along with parts of two shorter tables, were discovered. The room appears to be too far from the kitchen to be used as a dining room. What is even more important is that a bronze and a clay inkstand were found, one of which had dried ink in it. Another inkstand was found in another room. This all points to the room being a scriptorium where the Dead Sea Scrolls could have been written.

The manuscripts of the whole Wadi Qumran area came from these first two periods of occupation at Khirbet Qumran, excluding those that might have been brought to the site. Potsherds were found in the area which bear Hebrew writing in the same form of the alphabet as is found on the manuscripts.<sup>10</sup>

Ashes and arrowheads show that the second phase of occupation came to a violent end. Josephus records that Vespasian was at Jericho in June of 69 A.D., and left a garrison there. It seems logical that part of this garrison, which belonged to the famous Tenth Legion,

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 66-67.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 67.



attacked and destroyed the buildings at Qumran and then occupied the ruin as a post for watching and guarding the Dead Sea. A coin of Vespasian from the year 70 A.D., two of the city of Ascalon from the years 72-73 A.D., three coins of Judea Capta from the reign of Titus (79-81 A.D.), and of Agrippa II circa eighty-six coins were found from the third occupation of the site and probably left there by the Roman garrison. Being basically military, this third phase of occupation contained relatively little pottery.<sup>11</sup>

A fourth and brief phase of occupation was found in the form of thirteen coins from the time of the Second Jewish Revolt (132-135 A.D.).<sup>12</sup>

A third campaign of excavation was carried out from February 15th to April 15th, 1954. The Assembly Hall was excavated. Also uncovered were elaborate arrangements for assuring an adequate water supply. This campaign also revealed that the Qumran site had been occupied during the Iron II age (i.e., eighth and seventh centuries B.C.). This may be the "City of Salt" mentioned in Joshua 15:62. There is of course no connection between the pre-exilic occupation and those periods with which we are concerned.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.



The fourth excavation campaign (February 2nd to April 6th, 1955) and the fifth campaign (February 18th to March 28th, 1956), give us a better picture of the settlement at Khirbet Qumran.<sup>13</sup>

As previously mentioned Clermont-Ganneau opened a few graves during his studies.<sup>14</sup> Since then more graves have been opened. The main cemetery lies to the east of the ruins, with smaller cemeteries to the north, east and south. In the main cemetery, which contains over one thousand graves, eighteen have been opened, all of which contained the skeletons of men. Further to the east and south, six tombs have been opened which contained skeletons of women and children. Two tombs were also opened in the cemetery to the north, in one of these a man was buried, in the other a woman. It would appear that the main cemetery was reserved for the men who were probably the regular members of the community.<sup>15</sup> This raises the problem of who were the women and children; and this is of course connected with the question of whether or not the community included only celibates, as Pliny would seem to imply, or whether they had family life in connection with the monastery.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 69. It is not the purpose of this thesis to dwell upon the excavations of Khirbet Qumran except to use from that information what is important in our search for the origins of the community.

<sup>14</sup> Cf., chapter II, p.23.

<sup>15</sup> Burrow, More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls, op. cit., pp. 23f.

<sup>16</sup> Cf., chapter II, p.1.



### Occupation and Authorship

If a theory is to be posited concerning the origins of the Khirbet Qumran community, we must use the evidence of these ruins to answer two primary questions.

1. For what period of time did the people who supposedly wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls occupy the site of Khirbet Qumran?
2. Did these people who occupied these ruins write the Dead Sea Scrolls?

In answer to the first question, it must be established what was the earliest possible date these people could have arrived. It may be safely assumed that the original settlement during the Iron II period had nothing to do with the writing of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Therefore, we move to what phase Ia and Ib has discovered during the second round of excavation in 1953.

The coin record for the second phase of occupation of the Qumran site is as follows: five copper coins and eleven silver of seleucid markings, five of which can be attributed to Antiochus Sidetes VII; one certain coin of Judas Aristobulus (104-103 B.C.), one hundred and forty-three from the reign of Alexander Jannaeus (103-96 B.C.), and ten coins from the remaining days of the Hasmonaeon era (76-37 B.C.).<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Frank Moore Cross, Jr., "The Early History of the Qumran Community", McCormick Quarterly, XXI (March, 1968), 249.



The phase Ib of occupation came to an abrupt end with a fire and earthquake. The traces of these are very clear. There is a clean layer of ashes beneath the level of phase 2 reconstruction which indicates a hugh conflagration of the whole site. Even more impressive are the results of the earthquake. As previously mentioned, a fault-line runs north to south through the eastern section of the main building and the eastern edge has dropped about fifty centimetres. This fault-line runs the entire length of the settlement and tore apart walls and cisterns that lay in its path. We can date this earthquake to the spring of 31 B.C., just before the battle of Actium. Josephus tells us the earthquake spread great disaster throughout Judea, especially in the Jordan valley.<sup>18</sup> The fire probably resulted on account of the open fireplaces being affected by the earthquake, or as Father Milik believes, from a deliberate attempt to burn the buildings down on the part of the occupants.<sup>19</sup>

After the fire only five coins from Herod's long reign were found, plus one of the city of Tyre dated 29 B.C. This would seem to indicate that no attempt was made to rebuild immediately the damaged buildings.<sup>20</sup> During this time it is quite possible that some of the

<sup>18</sup> Josephus, Antiquities, XV:V:1.

<sup>19</sup> Milik, op. cit., p. 52.

<sup>20</sup> A treasure of five hundred and fifty-eight silver coins were found hidden in three jars below the level of phase 2 and a bit above the debris of occupation of phase Ib, most of them are Tyrian stamp, tetradrachms spanning in date the first century B.C., the latest falling between the years 9 B.C.- 1 A.D. Frank Cross, Jr. claims this hord was probably by some one withholding wealth from the common treasury or an embezzling church official. C.F., Cross, Ancient Library of Qumran . . . op. cit., p. 44 (footnote 15).



community occupied the site, living in shacks or tents which would leave no archeological record. However, during the reign of Herod's son Archelaus (4 B.C. - 16 A.D.), we find six coins; seven coins of the procurators under Tiberius (A.D. 14-37), and a silver coin of Tyre dated 29 A.D.; twenty-three coins of Herod Agrippa I (A.D. 37-44), five of the procurators of Judea under Claudius (A.D. 44-54); and eleven struck by the Jewish rebels during the first two years of the First Jewish Revolt (A.D. 66-70). With this, the record comes to an end of phase 2 of the occupation.<sup>21</sup>

When using coins to date occupation, one must remember that coins are not used until after they are struck, and that they remain in use for many years after they are struck. So therefore, one can assume that the site would not be occupied until at least the time of Antiochus Sidetes VII, who began his reign in 138 B.C. So one can say that they very outside limit for the first occupation of the Qumran site would be 138 B.C. It is obvious that there is a break in the occupation around 31 B.C. and that the rebuilding of the site occurred during the rule of Archelaus. One could assume that during the intervening time temporary housing measures were undertaken. Scholars are all agreed that the same people who occupied the site just before the earthquake, occupied the site for phase 2 of the occupation. This is assumed because the same general plan and manner of use of the building was followed. By the coin record one can date

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<sup>21</sup> F.F. Bruce, Second Thoughts on the Dead Sea Scrolls (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), p. 49.



the end of the Qumran site sometime during the First Jewish Revolt. In addition to this, the walls of phase 2 are mined through and the building ruins are sealed in layers of ash from a great conflagration. Of utmost importance are the telltale iron arrowheads used by the Roman legionaries.<sup>22</sup>

We can reconstruct, with some detail, the occasion of the end of the settlement. We know from Josephus that Vespasian rested his forces, including the Fifth and the Tenth and Fifteenth Legions in Caesarea in the summer of 67 A.D., after the first phase of his Galilean campaign.<sup>23</sup> The Fifth and Fifteenth Legions wintered in Caesarea, the Tenth in Bethshan. In the early spring of 68 A.D. Vespasian began his campaign to reduce Judea and Peraea. The Tenth Legion (Fretensis) under Trajan crossed the Jordan into Peraea. Vespasian marched eastward from Caesarea going first southward and then back north reducing Judea. In June 68 A.D., Vespasian led his troops from the pass at Shechem down into Jericho, where he was joined by the forces of Trajan from Peraea. Vespasian took Jericho. The centre at Qumran was destroyed, no doubt by a contingent of Vespasian's troops in the early summer of 68 A.D.

<sup>22</sup> Cross, Ancient Library of Qumran . . . , op. cit., pp. 45 ff.

<sup>23</sup> Josephus, Bellum, III: IX: 1.



The coin record from this period includes an undated coin of Ascalon stamped with the Roman numeral X, countermark of the paymaster of the Tenth Legion. This adds grim confirmation to the facts.<sup>24</sup>

Whether the community, in whole or in part, fled their community with the advent of the Romans, or were trapped in Qumran and were slaughtered, we cannot know with certainty. In any event, they were prevented from carrying away their manuscripts which probably had been hurriedly put in the caves for safekeeping.<sup>25</sup> Ironically, had the community survived, the manuscripts most likely would have perished.<sup>26</sup>

Phase 3 of Qumran site belongs to the Roman Garrison. The post was maintained for a few years, being abandoned toward the end of the first century. Except for a few people during the Second Jewish Revolt (A.D. 132-38), the site of Khirbet Qumran was never occupied until the archaeological expeditions of the early nineteen fifties. Therefore, from archaeological evidence we will assume the Qumran site was occupied by the Qumran Community circa 135 B.C. to 68 A.D.

<sup>24</sup> Cross, Ancient Library of Qumran . . . , loc. cit.

<sup>25</sup> The fact the library of the Quman Community was hurriedly put in the caves can be seen in the fact that the scrolls were not deposited in jars before being deposited. Thus the fragmentary condition of the manuscripts unlike the manuscripts found in Cave I.

<sup>26</sup> Cf., G.R. Driver, The Judaean Scrolls (Oxford: Blackwell, 1965) pp. 394ff. Driver does not believe that the community abandoned the site after its attack by the Roman Tenth Legion.



The answer to the second question (p. 30) must be that the people who occupied the site of Khirbet Qumran during the first and second phases of occupation wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls described in Chapter One. While considering that no absolute answer can be given to an archaeological problem, all the evidence points to the conclusion that the Qumran Community wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls.

We have established that the edifices at Khirbet Qumran were destroyed in the summer of 68 A.D. and no doubt the activities of the community came to an end at that time. At any rate, they came to an end at that site. Therefore, the Dead Sea Scrolls would all have to have been written by the summer of 68 A.D. That some of the manuscripts date earlier than the founding of the Qumran community need not be a concern as some of the manuscripts could have been brought to the site by its founders.<sup>27</sup> The linen, in which a scroll from Cave I was wrapped, was tested by the radio-carbon process at the University of Chicago. The results of this test showed that the linen should be dated from the year A.D. 33, plus or minus two hundred years, (i.e. 167 B.C. - 233 A.D.).<sup>28</sup> This therefore, makes it within the time period of the occupation of the ruins of Khirbet Qumran. The scrolls themselves cannot be subjected to this test as it involves destruction of the substance being tested. Scholars, therefore, revert to a paleographical argument. This argument has caused much controversy in the past because the number of competent

<sup>27</sup> Cf., chapter I, p. 12.

<sup>28</sup> Burrows, Dead Sea Scrolls, op. cit., p. 52.



scholars in this field is few, and not all who make pronouncements on this subject are competent. The procedure of paleography is like that used by a paleontologist as he arranges fossil skeletons to show how the prehistoric eohippus evolved into the modern horse. Millar Burrows presents a good argument in his book, The Dead Sea Scrolls, citing scholars especially Birnbaum; Burrows concludes that the manuscripts found in the caves were written during the period of 300 B.C. to about 68 A.D. The argument used centers around the use of medial and final forms of the Hebrew letter ד. The basis of the argument is that the final form of the letter (ד) becomes more regularly used in the latter scrolls.<sup>29</sup>

Yet another method of dating the scrolls is the argument from language. In other words, if the reader were presented with a copy of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, an original version of the King Jame's Bible, and a New English Bible, he would at once observe the evolution of the English language. In applying this argument to the Dead Sea Scrolls, one is faced with a lack of texts from the same time period for purposes of comparison. When one looks at the orthography of 1Q1sa<sup>a</sup>, one notices the abundant use of the scriptio plena as opposed to the 1Q1sa<sup>b</sup> which more closely agrees with the Masoretic text. The problem

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Ibid., pp. 83-101. Here Burrows gives a complete argument for his dating.



arises because it is hard to know just when the scriptio plena came into general use. Kahle has pointed out that this free use of the scriptio plena was characteristic of unofficial or vulgar texts. This argument is filled with problems, and all we can say is that the argument involves much disagreement among scholars and ends up very inconclusively.<sup>30</sup> The same conclusions can be drawn with grammatical arguments. It seems that no clear conclusions can be formed except to say that "while the spelling of this scroll is relatively late, the grammatical forms indicated by the spelling are older than those preserved in the Masoretic text."<sup>31</sup> Perhaps the best conclusion to be reached is that the scrolls can prove to be valuable in the historical study of the language, but should be dated by other available means. The two best arguments are the radio-carbon dating of the linen in which some of the scrolls was wrapped and the paleographical argument. Either these scrolls were brought to Qumran or were written there. That they were written there is supported with the discovery of the scriptorium, the inkwells, the similarity between the vase found at the site and the one found in the cave, and the similarity between the script found at the site and the script on the Dead Sea Scrolls.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., pp. 102-119. Burrows gives a full discussion of this argument.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 115.

<sup>32</sup> Cf., chapter II, pp. 25f.



Of course the subject is always open to argument, but it seems that the most logical conclusion is to connect the Khirbet Qumran Community with the scrolls found in the caves nearby.

### Conclusion

It has been shown that there was a group of two hundred to three hundred people occupying the site of Khirbet Qumran from about 138 B.C. to 68 A.D. They appear to have lived a communal life, often likened to Essenes.<sup>33</sup> They lived an ascetic life and appear to have had little contact with the world. This in itself would not make these people so famous. Many a group has forsaken the ways of the secular world for the confines of a religious life, or to wander aimlessly in some California "hippiedom". These people are famous because they produced some scrolls which were great archaeological discoveries. These finds are of untold importance to biblical scholarship because of their age and contents. This group, whom we call the Khirbet Qumran Community, although it forsook the ways of the world, ended abruptly when the world took notice of it during the First Jewish Revolt. No doubt this tragic end was the fact - or which permits us today to have a rare glimpse into the ancient world by virtue of their writings. But the question still remains, - the purpose of this thesis - namely from where did this now famous community originate? What is the origin of the Qumran Community?

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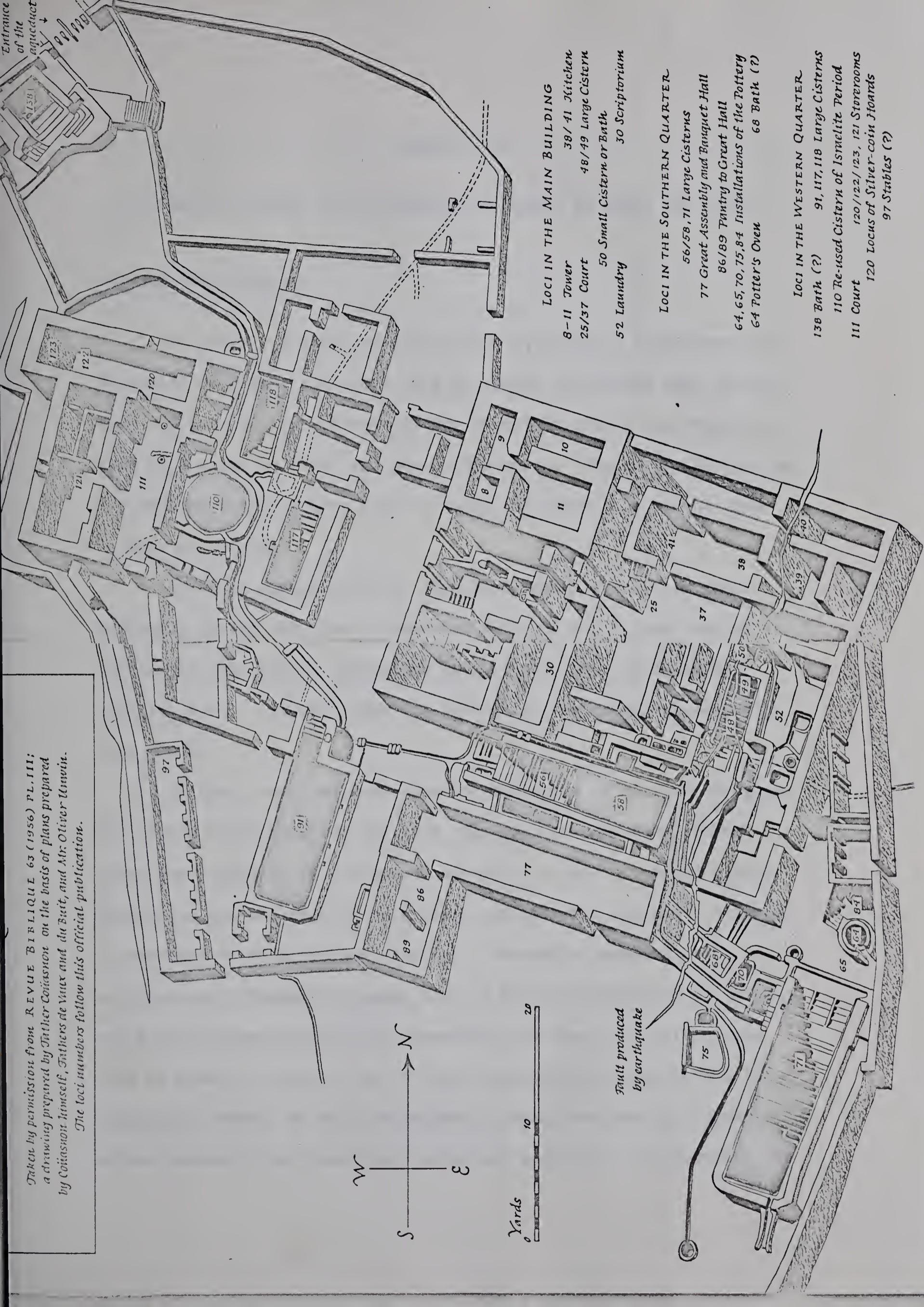
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Cf., chapter V, pp. 92f.



Why did they seek out this desolate spot beside the Dead Sea? We have discussed the history of these famous finds and discussed what was found. Then we have tried to show when and for how long this group existed and that they wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls. Now it is time to take a look into the history of Palestine to see if there are any facts which would cause such a group to depart into the wilderness. What was Palestine like in the second century B.C.? What dominant groups played a role in its affairs?







## CHAPTER III

### A HISTORY OF ISRAEL FROM ALEXANDER THE GREAT TO HEROD THE GREAT

#### Pre-Maccabean History

To write a history of this period is indeed a frustrating task. No period in Israel's history is more poorly documented than from the time of Ezra to the outbreak of the Maccabean revolt for which we have such works as First and Second Maccabees. Though the history of the ancient world at that time is known, our knowledge of the Jews is next to nothing.

It would appear that the Jewish sectarian groups had their beginning during the time of Nehemiah (465-424 B.C.), and emerged as distinguishable groups during the rule of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.). At this time our historical narrative resumes with more detail.

At this point, we must consider the works of Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian, who was born circa 37 A.D. and died shortly after the beginning of the second century. He was descended from a Maccabean, and was thus of both royal and priestly lineage. Josephus is remembered today for his writings. Generally speaking, his writings are intended to remove some of the misconceptions his Greek and Roman contemporaries held concerning the Jews. To attain this end, he does not hesitate to use many ingenious interpretations of historical events, as well as legends. Great care must be taken before assuming that Josephus' historical narratives are factual. He



was a man writing with a very distinct purpose in mind - to vindicate his Jewish people and his historical methods fall subservient to that end.

The earliest of his writings is Concerning the Jewish War, a work in seven books. It covers briefly the time of Antiochus Epiphanes to the outbreak of the First Jewish Revolt (66-70 A.D.), and then it narrates the events of that war in detail. The work is basically an apology for the Romans; but also it is an apology for the Jews in that it pictures the extremist elements which favoured the war - the war with Romans - misguided, selfish, and cruel men who were in no way motivated by traditional Jewish religion.

The second work of Josephus is "The Antiquities of the Jews". It was published in the year 93 A.D. It covers the history of the Jews from the earliest Biblical time to the outbreak of the First Jewish Revolt. The "Antiquities" slants history to glorify the Greeks and the Romans. Josephus is not solely dependent upon the Old Testament as his source. He constantly used the works of Alexander Polyhistor, Nicolaus of Damascus, and Strabo. Josephus gives us a good account of Herod I, but his account of Herod's successors is hardly more than a sketch. In his treatment of the Maccabees, he is largely dependent upon First Maccabees. Unfortunately Josephus has very little to say about the history from Ezra to Antiochus Epiphanes, which isn't too helpful.

Josephus also wrote the "Life" and "Against Apion", but these are of little interest to the purpose of this thesis. Naturally, Josephus



is of great importance to the Biblical student because he provides a Jewish background for Christian history as does no other writer of antiquity. But, once again, his polemical purposes colour his work. However, from his works, we do get a picture of the Jewish sectarian groups, although he has very little reference to the Qumran Community.

Other important works which we have at our disposal are the books of First and Second Maccabees. The first book of Maccabees is an historical work of considerable importance. It tells of the heroic exploits of Judas Maccabeus and his family during the struggle of the Jews for religious and political liberty during the second century B.C. Beginning with the accession of Antiochus Epiphanes in 175 B.C., the book carries the narrative down to the time of the death of Simon, the last of Judas' brothers, about 134 B.C. The book of Second Maccabees is of less historical importance. This book covers a fifteen-year period from the reign of Seleucus IV (187 B.C.) to the death of Nicanor (160 B.C.). The exaggeration of the marvelous and miraculous in the narrative adds doubt to the book as a source of historical data.

We shall begin our historical sketch with Alexander the Great, son of Philip of Macedon. Alexander the Great had conquered Palestine and at the time of his death he had no successor to himself. Upon his death in 323 B.C. his kingdom, Macedonia, Egypt, and the rest, was divided among his three generals. Egypt went to Ptolemy, and the rest of his empire excluding Macedonia but including Palestine went to Seleucus I (312-280). Ptolemy secured Palestine in 312 by a victory at Gaza. He transplanted thousands of Jews to Alexandria.



Palestine was ruled by the Ptolemies for almost a century after this. But of the fortunes of the Jewish people of this time we know next to nothing. Most likely the Ptolemies made as few changes as possible in the governmental system which they inherited from the Persians. Our only real clue to the period is suggested by the Zeno Papyri.<sup>1</sup> Among these papyri are two letters from Tobiah of 'Ammon, which indicates to us that the Tobiads continued to occupy the position that they once had under the Persian king. They were governors in Transjordan, charged with the maintenance of order and no doubt the remittance of taxes. It would appear that the high priest was the real head of the Palestinian Jewish Community, both spiritual and secular. As long as the Jews paid a set amount of tribute to the Ptolemies, the Ptolemies did not interfere in the internal affairs of Judah. As far as we can discern, the Jews lived in relative peace.

In the meantime, the Seleucids never quite forgot what they regarded as the Ptolemies' stealing of Palestine, though they were not in a position to do anything about it. During this period the Seleucids had been bothered with internal trouble so that by the time Antiochus III had ascended the throne the Seleucids' effective control was restricted to an area between the Taurus Mountains and Media. With the assent of Antiochus III, the Great (223-187 B.C.), all this changed. He was a vigorous ruler, and in a series of battles

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<sup>1</sup>

The Zeno Papyri is papyri discovered in Fayum, - which is some correspondence of Zeno, an agent of the finance minister of Ptolemy II, Philadelphus (285-246 B.C.).



he effectively restored the Seleucid power from Asia Minor to the frontiers of India. Antiochus the Great moved against Egypt, now ruled by Ptolemy IV, Philopater (221-203 B.C.). However, Antiochus was defeated in 217 B.C. at Raphia, on the southern edge of Palestine near Gaza. But the struggle was renewed after Ptolemy V, Epiphanes (203-181 B.C.) had ascended the throne as a child. The struggle was finally decided when, at Panium near the Jordan headwaters, the Egyptian army was defeated in the year 198 B.C. The Seleucids annexed Palestine. Josephus tells us that the Jews received the change with joy, welcoming Antiochus into Jerusalem, and even going so far as to take up arms against the Egyptian garrison which was in the citadel of Jerusalem. No doubt the Jews were tired of the war which had ravaged their land; secondly, maybe the Jews thought that the change would improve their lot. Josephus tells us that Antiochus found Jerusalem in poor shape due to "such accidents that had befallen its inhabitants". In order that the city might recover, he waived the taxes for a period of three years.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the Jews were assured much the same privileges as they had enjoyed under the Persians, and presumably under the Ptolemies. They were guaranteed the right to live unmolested in accordance with their Law. In addition, Antiochus helped the religious establishment by tax exemptions for the priests, the council of elders, and the scribes. The temple, which had apparently been damaged, was repaired by the state. It looked like a

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Josephus, Antiquities, XII:III:3-4.



good start, and, no doubt, the Jews were very pleased.

Yet while everything looked bright for the Jews of the second century B.C., the foundations for future trouble were being laid. Of far more importance than any political event, yet linked with political events, was the Hellenization process. Alexander had wanted to link east and west under the Aegis of Greek culture. He himself married a Persian girl and arranged mass marriages for those under his command. Greece was overpopulated, and so Greeks mushroomed into the surrounding empire settling up Greek colonies throughout Alexander's empire and its successors. Palestine itself was not immune. Greek colonies were founded in Palestine, such as Sebaste (Samaria), Philadelphia ('Ammon), and Philateria (south of the Sea of Galilee). Greek quickly became the lingua franca of the civilized world.

Palestine is a trading route, and so it got more than its share of Greek merchants and artisans. This Hellenization was not something that occurred naturally; it had an official "push" by the government.

We can see the results of this Hellenization process in our Bible. The book of Ecclesiastes is eclectic-combining both Stoic and Epicurean features as well as traditional Hebrew thought. Greek thought was in the air and, as times were changing, Jewish thinkers were trying to grapple with the times. However, let it be remembered that traditional Hebrew thought is as different from Greek as the languages are different. Thus whenever new thoughts begin to infiltrate a religion a normal reaction sets in. There are those who accept these new ideas into the traditional religion and their



religion becomes eclectic. And, on the other hand, there are those who reject this eclecticism with much vigour. We can see this reaction within the Christian Church today.

The majority of our churches try to reconcile modern scientific ideas with traditional religion. For example, we notice the Roman Catholic church with their widening of the permissible music in the mass; however, on the other hand, there are the more conservative Christian churches who resist all inroads of change and vigorously hold to their traditional religious principles, and reject change as a product of the Devil. Such a schism occurred within the Jewish religion during the third and second centuries B.C. There remained the godly Jews who did not compromise their traditional religious principles, and there were the Jews who were embarrassed by their native laws and customs. A small example of this may be found in the Greek gymnasia. It was customary to exercise in the nude (a thing which in itself was not acceptable to the Jewish faith), and some Jews even underwent surgery to try and hide their circumcision. As indicated above the Jews enjoyed relative freedom under Antiochus III; and the Hellenization process might have gone on with little real open rebellion. But historical factors were soon to produce a drastic change.

Around the turn of the second century B.C., it can be said that the Seleucid empire was at its greatest height when Antiochus made a grave error in judgement. Rome had just finished crushing Carthage at Zama (202 B.C.), and the Carthaginian general fled to the



Seleucid court hoping there to continue the struggle against Rome as best he could. Partly at Hannibal's prompting, and partly to further his own ambitions, Antiochus advanced into Greece. Rome declared war (192 B.C.), and quickly drove Antiochus from Europe following him into Asia; and in 190 B.C. at Magnesia, dealt a shattering defeat to Antiochus. The Romans never let a defeated enemy off lightly. In the peace settlement at Apamea, Antiochus was required to yield all Asia Minor save Cilicia, and surrender his war elephants and navy. He was required to hand over Hannibal and other refugees, together with twenty hostages, including his own son (later Antiochus IV), and of course he had to pay an enormous indemnity. The only one of these terms which Antiochus was not forced to meet was that of surrendering Hannibal who fled for his life. Antiochus the Great had been disgraced because like many gamblers, he didn't know when to stop. In 187 B.C., he was killed while robbing a temple in Elam, trying to get money to pay the Romans. At this point, the Seleucid empire entered its long decline. Now it was being pressured by Rome for some more money and thus it was necessary to tax the people quite oppressively.

Antiochus was followed by Seleucus IV (187-175 B.C.). Apparently, Seleucus confirmed the privileges granted by his father.<sup>3</sup> However, we are told that Seleucus through his minister Heliodorus and with the help of Simon, the captain of the temple, who had had a quarrel with the high priest Onias III, tried to gain possession of private funds

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<sup>3</sup> II Maccabees, 3:3.



deposited in the temple.<sup>4</sup> Although the story is filled with legend, there is no reason to doubt its substance. Seleucus needed money to pay off the Romans. Onias was obliged to visit the Seleucid court to present his case in the face of rumors that he himself had connived with Heliodorus to rob the temple bank. An ominous pattern had now set in. It contained intimations of much worse to come.

Seleucus was assassinated and succeeded by his brother Antiochus IV, Epiphanes (175-163 B.C.). It was during his reign that the quarrel between the purist Jews and the Hellenization process erupted with full fury. As we have stated, Antiochus IV was one of the hostages given to the Romans. He was released and was on his way home when the news reached him of his brother's death.

Antiochus was faced with a basic problem - the defence of his realm. The eastern provinces were threatened by the Parthians. On the south was Egypt whose Pharaoh, Ptolemy VI, Philometor (181-146 B.C.) was ready to reclaim Palestine. Above all this was Rome which was now becoming a great power and taking a great interest in the eastern Mediterranean. Antiochus IV had a healthy respect for the Romans. He felt a desperate need to unify his people. This was the only way in which he could defend his realm. At the same time, he needed money badly, and would do anything to get it. Temples had money; Antiochus would plunder them. And the temple at Jerusalem was

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<sup>4</sup>

Ibid., 3: 4-40.



not overlooked. Therefore, in the interests of national defence, Antiochus pursued a policy of active Hellenization. This was different from his predecessors who at the most encouraged Hellenization. The process included the worship of Zeus and other Greek gods - in an eclectic way with the native deities. Antiochus also proclaimed himself the visible manifestation of Zeus. His image appeared on coins in the likeness of Zeus, and his name Epiphanes means "god manifest".

At the same time, the Jews were by no means blameless for what was happening. The Jews were not agreed as to the desirability of the Greek culture and the degree to which one could adopt it and still remain a Jew. The Jews were quarreling among themselves and the rivalry extended even up to the office of the high priest. Antiochus would listen to the person who would be most congenial with his policy of Hellenization and who had the most money to offer. Antiochus was meddling in the affairs of the Jewish religion in a way no king had done before.

At the time Antiochus ascended the throne, the legitimate high priest was Onias III, a man of the conservative party who was in Antioch for an audience with the now assassinated Seleucus IV.

In II Maccabees we are told that Jason in the absence of his brother, Onias III, offered the king hundreds of talents in exchange for the high priestly office. A clear act of simony Jason, with his liberal views, also promised his full co-operation with the royal policy.<sup>5</sup> The king agreed and it is recorded in II Maccabees that Jason also set

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<sup>5</sup> II Maccabees, 4: 7-10.



up a gymnasium for the young men of Jerusalem. Young men enrolled and played in all types of Greek games. We are also told that young priests were no longer attending to their duties as priests, but were competing in the games.<sup>6</sup> Of course the gymnasium had religious overtones. Greek sports were inseparable from the cult of Hercules. Therefore, it was fitting that the young men of the gymnasium should offer recognition to the gods who were its protectors. Now the Jews were not living solely within the confines of their own Law as guaranteed by Antiochus III. This had been broken, and with Jewish connivance.

This was not the end. Jason was removed from his office after only three years by Menelaus who outbid him for the high priestly office. Who Menelaus was is uncertain and it is doubtful that he was even of priestly lineage.<sup>7</sup> Jason fled across the Jordan. Menelaus had trouble obtaining the bribe which he had offered and began stealing temple vessels and selling them.<sup>8</sup> When the legitimate high priest, Onias III, who was still in Antioch, protested, Menelaus had him assassinated.<sup>9</sup>

We are now seeing develop one of the first religious persecutions in the history of the world. We see its subtle beginning with the

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<sup>6</sup>  
Ibid., 4:11ff.

<sup>7</sup>  
Ibid., 4:23-26.

<sup>8</sup>  
Ibid., 4:33-38.

<sup>9</sup>  
Ibid.



royal interference in the office of the high priest, and it continued until vast changes had taken place. The beginning became a little more clear when Antiochus was ordered out of Egypt by the Romans. Smarting with pride, he became suspicious of Judea, and he started to slap around whatever got in his way. He plundered the temple and even stripped the gold decoration off the altar.<sup>10</sup> Antiochus was now considered an enemy of the Jewish religion, a Hitler fanatic who would stop at nothing. Event passed on to event. Antiochus appointed a royal commissioner to further the cause of Hellenization. Presumably he met with stiff opposition.<sup>11</sup> To bolster his policy, Antiochus sent Apollonius to keep the people in order. Apollonius approached Jerusalem in a peaceful manner and then attacked and butchered many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The city was looted and in 167 B.C. a citadel called the Acra was built, remaining for twenty-five years - a hateful symbol of foreign domination.

So, now we have in Jerusalem a Greek polis in charge of an undefended Jerusalem. We have developing here something which was quite normal in the ancient world. Menelaus and his renegade priests wanted to make Judaism syncretistic; i.e., they wanted Judaism to incorporate the worship of Zeus with that of Yahweh. Normally this would have been allright to the people of the ancient world, but

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 5: 15-21; I Maccabees I:17-24.

<sup>11</sup> II Maccabees 5:22ff.



Antiochus underestimated the monotheism of Judaism. To the Jew of that day, there was one God and one God alone according to the First Commandment. So the Jews resisted this syncretism and this led Antiochus to ban Judaism. Sacrifices in the temple were forbidden. Circumcision of children was forbidden, and all copies of the law were to be destroyed. The penalty was death for anyone who broke these laws.

In December of 167 B.C., the cult of Olympian Zeus was introduced into the temple. An altar to Zeus was set up and swine's flesh was offered on it. This is the "abomination of desolation" spoken of in Daniel.<sup>12</sup> Antiochus answered any resistance with cruel persecution. Some refused to fight on the Sabbath.<sup>13</sup> Others refused to eat unclean food.<sup>14</sup> The core of this resistance was known as the Hasidim (the pious, the loyal ones), from which the Pharisees and Essenes probably descended. Most likely many Jews died in this persecution and it was inevitable that the Jews should take up arms. The rebellion exploded in Modein, a village in the Shephelah.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Daniel 9: 27; 11: 31; I Maccabees 1:54.

<sup>13</sup> I Maccabees 2: 29-38.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 1:62f.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 2: 1-28.



### The Maccabean Revolt

In the village of Modein lived a man of priestly lineage named Mattathias who had five sons, John, Simon, Judas, Eleazar and Jonathan. In the year 167 B.C. an officer came to the village to enforce the royal decree. Mattathias, as a leading citizen of the community, was asked to make a pagan sacrifice. He refused, but out of the gathered crowd came a young Jew and made the sacrifice,<sup>16</sup> Mattathias killed both the Jew and the Seleucid officer. After his angry outburst Mattathias had but one choice; namely to take his sons and whoever would support him and flee to the hills. He did, and thus the Maccabean revolt was on. A revolt was begun that would have far reaching consequences.<sup>17</sup>

Those who were zealous for the love of Judaism went with Mattathias. Their attitude was practical. Seeing it would be suicide not to fight on the Sabbath, they set aside the Sabbath law.<sup>18</sup>

The old man soon died and the leadership was passed on to his third son, Judas called Maccabeus, (i.e., the hammerer). Antiochus soon learned that his Palestinian troops could not handle the revolt. Apollonius, (probably the man who ravaged Jerusalem a year or two

<sup>16</sup>  
Ibid., 2ff.

<sup>17</sup>  
The book of Daniel was written during this period, but I feel it has little to offer to us in searching for the origins of the Qumran Community. It is apocalyptic and really does not add to our fund of historical knowledge.

<sup>18</sup>  
I Maccabees 2: 29-41.



previously) was sent in, but was defeated by Judas.<sup>19</sup> There were other battles against Seron.<sup>20</sup> Then Antiochus found himself occupied in a campaign against the Parthians and turned over his command to Lysias. In two battles Judas crushed him and held the Syrian garrison in the Acra.<sup>21</sup> He went into Jerusalem, and cleansed the temple of its pagan desecration. Priests, who had remained true to the Law, were installed in the temple and the temple was re-dedicated in 165 B.C.<sup>22</sup> Not long after, a peace agreement was reached with the Seleucids, and the religious persecution was ended.<sup>23</sup> Menelaus was put to death and the next high priest nominated was Alcimus of Zadokite descent. Even though his Jewish name Jakim Eliakim had been Hellenized to Alcimus, the devout Jews accepted him. Therefore, at this point we should find the country of Palestine at rest. The religious persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes had been withdrawn and the temple was now purified. The continuance of the Maccabean war is now no longer a religious cause for that had been satisfied. The Maccabean revolt takes on a

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 3:10-12.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 3:13-26.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 3:42 - 4:34.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 4:36-61. This the Jews celebrate to this day as the feast of Hanukkah.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 5: - 7:4.



political nature.<sup>24</sup> The ambitions of Judas were still unsatisfied; he fled to the hills and was joined there by men who wanted more than just religious freedom.<sup>25</sup> Still trying to win political freedom for his country, Judas fought a pitched battle with the Syrian General, Bacchides. Just before the battle at Elasa many followers deserted Judas and he himself died in the battle. His followers were persecuted and took to hiding. His place was taken by his brother, Jonathan. Alcimus remained high priest and freedom of worship was not infringed upon.

Before the battle in which Judas had been killed, a shift had taken place in the thinking of the Jewish people. In the beginning, Mattathias had revolted against the forcible Hellenization of the Jewish people. In his revolt he had been joined by those who were true to the traditional religion. By now, religious freedom had been restored and some of the original people in revolt were quite satisfied with what had been achieved. In other words, this group recognized Syrian sovereignty and the high priest Alcimus. Judas was left with only a minority. Therefore, three groups now can be distinguished in Palestine: the Hellenized Jews, the Hasmonaeans or Maccabees and their followers, and a group who called themselves the

<sup>24</sup>

Ibid., 7:12-16. This passage is of the utmost importance. We notice here the Maccabees no longer have the over-whelming support of the people. Some (the Hasidim) are content with just their religious freedom.

<sup>25</sup>

Although Judas had defeated Lysias in battle, Judas by no means had political control over Palestine. The Acra was still garrisoned with Syrian soldiers.



Hasidim. The major difference between Judas' followers and the Hasidim was that the former wanted political power while the latter were interested mainly in religious freedom and in having a Zadokite high priest. The Hasidim existed before the Maccabean revolt but abjured from further fighting after the cleansing of the temple in 165 B.C.<sup>26</sup>

We also notice the rise of the scribes of the Pharisees during this period.<sup>27</sup> They began a new epoch in the Jewish religion. They were a class of people not of priestly origin who sought the same authority as a priest. The Scribe arose during the Postexilic Age. The Scribes had the task of adopting the legal prescriptions to the changing times.

Judas died in 160 B.C., and Alcimus the high priest died one year later. John, one of the other Maccabean brothers, died in the same year among the Nabataeans. Jonathan now held little strength after the battle in which Judas was killed.

After the death of Alcimus, nobody was appointed as high priest to replace him. Why Bacchides did not appoint a successor to act as a buffer between himself and the people is a mystery. Maybe he thought his task of pacifying the country was done. At any rate, he returned to his country. The land was said to be at rest for two years.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>26</sup> I Maccabees 2:42; I Maccabees 7:13.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 7:12, Nehemiah 8:9.

<sup>28</sup> I Maccabees 9:58.



No doubt during this time, Jonathan and Simon regained their strength against the Hellenistic Jews. Bacchides returned, but found his enemies too strong and he was in a difficult position. Peace was made with Jonathan. Jonathan positioned himself at Michmash, leaving the Hellenistic Jews to rule Jerusalem.<sup>29</sup> It would appear that except for Jerusalem, Jonathan ruled Israel, beginning in 157 B.C. In 153 B.C. Jonathan had his chance for more power. A pretender had arisen to the Syrian throne, one Alexander Balas. Demetrius I, the legitimate king of Syria, in an effort to gain Jonathan's support, granted him many concessions save one, and Alexander Balas was quick to perceive this. Demetrius let Jonathan take possession of Jerusalem and withdrew most of his troops from Palestine.<sup>30</sup> However, Alexander Balas outbid Demetrius by appointing Jonathan to the vacant position of high priest. He then sent him a purple robe and a crown of gold and the title 'friend' of the king.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>  
cf. Ibid., chapter 9.

<sup>30</sup> One notable exception remained in that the Syrians still garrisoned the Acra in Jerusalem.

<sup>31</sup> I Maccabees 10:15-20. This is a most important event for our study.



So we have Jonathan accepting the high priesthood under rather dubious circumstances; i.e., from a usurper to the Syrian throne. This made no difference to Jonathan and he quickly seized upon the opportunity for self-aggrandizement. At the Feast of Tabernacles in October of 152 B.C. he put on the holy garments and officiated as the high priest.

Any way we look at this event, it only emphasizes the sordid state of religion in Israel. We now have a man of the sword in the office of the high priest and also a man who is not of Zadokite lineage. The first book of Maccabees tells us that Jonathan put on the holy garments and then recruited troops and "equipped them with arms in abundance".<sup>32</sup>

Jonathan was not elected by the orthodox Jews, nor would they agree to this matter in any way. It is highly possible that a rift was now occurring between the Hasmonaean high priest and the Hasidim. To the orthodox Jew to hold both military and spiritual power was incompatible.

By the year 150 B.C., Alexander Balas had succeeded in defeating Demetrius and the relationship between Jonathan and Alexander was very friendly. For the next few years Jonathan was the undisputed leader of Israel.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 10:21.

<sup>33</sup> It must be remembered that Syrian troops were still located in the Acra at Jerusalem and thus Jonathan's political freedom can not in any way be considered absolute.



In the year 147 B.C., trouble again started for the Syrian government. The son of Demetrius I, whose name was also Demetrius, appeared in Syria with an army to drive out Alexander Balas. Jonathan remained on the side of Alexander and indeed was Alexander's only supporter. Even Ptolemy Philometor withdrew his support from his son-in-law.<sup>34</sup> In the year 145 B.C., Alexander was defeated in battle and sought refuge among the Arabs who in turn decapitated him. (Ptolemy also died from battle wounds about the sametime).

Jonathan now was determined to get rid of the last remaining vestige of Syrian suzerainty in Palestine, the Acra. Jonathan seized Jerusalem, but failed to get the support of the Hellenistic Jews. Demetrius summoned Jonathan to Ptolemais to account for his conduct.<sup>35</sup> The Acra was not removed but Jonathan got Palestine freed from all tribute, and for this Jonathan paid three hundred talents. Demetrius confirmed Jonathan in the high priesthood.<sup>36</sup> All this shows the weakened position of the Seleucid empire, a nation weakened through internal struggles.

Once again, trouble appeared for the Syrian King. The infant son of Alexander Bales, Antiochus VI, put forth a military man named Diodatus, who took the name of Trypho, and made his claim for the

<sup>34</sup> Philometor had given Alexander a daughter in marriage.

<sup>35</sup> I Maccabees 11:20-22.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 11:23-28.



throne. Demetrius needed help. Jonathan was willing to give it on the condition that the Acra and other Syrian strongholds are vacated. Demetrius was not in a position to refuse anything. Demetrius agreed and Jonathan sent three thousand men who helped to save Demetrius.

According to I Maccabees and Josephus, Demetrius broke faith.<sup>37</sup> Jonathan went over to the side of Trypho. Demetrius could not allow this to occur. He sent an army against Jonathan but eventually Jonathan defeated it. Then Demetrius made another attempt at Jonathan, but this failed.<sup>38</sup> Meanwhile Trypho had second thoughts about Jonathan's success against Demetrius. He could see that Jonathan wanted complete political freedom for Israel and we are told that Trypho aspired to the Syrian throne.<sup>39</sup> Naturally, Jonathan was not going to give up what he had acquired. Both sides prepared for battle at Bethshan. Trypho did not like the size of Jonathan's army and though it better to get rid of Jonathan by other means. Feigning peace with Jonathan, Trypho invited him back to Ptolemais in order to make a present to him of the city. Jonathan despite his skill and experience, made a mistake. He trusted Trypho, and took only a few men with him when he went to Ptolemais. No sooner had Jonathan entered the city of Ptolemais then the gates were shut: his men were killed and he himself was taken prisoner. When the news of this incident reached Israel, Simon took

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 11:53; Josephus Antiquities, XIII: V:3.

<sup>38</sup> I Maccabees 12:24-30.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 12:39-40; Josephus Antiquities, XIII:VI:1ff.



over. The year was 142 B.C. Simon quickly strengthened his position by fortifying the walls of Jerusalem and seizing Joppa. Trypho advanced with his army and demanded ransom for Jonathan. The money was sent, nevertheless, Jonathan was murdered at a place called Baskama.<sup>40</sup> Trypho returned to Syria, and Simon buried Jonathan at Modein.

The situation in Israel at the death of Jonathan was much different than the original Maccabees had ever hoped to attain. There was certainly religious freedom, the Hellenistic party had been suppressed, and Jonathan was high priest. The goal was complete political freedom.

At the time Simon took over in 142 B.C., there were still two kings in Syria, Demetrius II and the boy, Antiochus VI, under the care of Trypho. In 142 B.C. Trypho deposed Antiochus and assumed the crown of Syria. In 138 B.C., he murdered Antiochus.<sup>41</sup>

Simon ignores Trypho and asks Demetrius for relief for Israel.<sup>42</sup> Most likely the request was more strongly worded because in his reply Demetrius releases Israel from all tribute. This of course was taken by the Jews to mean complete political freedom.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 12:24-53.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 13:31-32. Antiquities, XIII: VII:1.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 13:34.



In the one hundred and seventieth year the yoke of the Gentiles was removed from Israel, and the people began to write in their documents and contracts, "In the first year of Simon the great high priest commander and leader of the Jews."<sup>43</sup>

Simon built up his defences, should Trypho attack, and he drove out the Syrian soldiers from the Acra.<sup>44</sup> Trypho did not attack, and Demetrius went east to gather forces for his fight with Trypho. Israel was at rest. Simon was in absolute control. With the advent of peace, Simon could now attend to other matters which were not of a military nature. One of these was the question of the position of high priest.

We have seen how the office of the high priest was hereditary in the house of Onias. The appointment of Jason was resented by nationalistic Jews, because Onias was still living and the appointment was made by a gentile king. When Menelaus was appointed, the orthodox Jew was even more offended because he was not of the high priestly family and maybe not even of a priestly family. Jonathan was only of a priestly family and was of course appointed by Alexander Balas, a gentile. How the Jewish populace felt about Jonathan taking over the office of the high priest cannot clearly be seen. It was a usurpation, and this applied to Simon when he succeeded to the high office. Simon saw that it was necessary, that there should be some formal recognition

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 13:41-42.

<sup>44</sup> I Maccabees 13:49-53. At this point, the last vestige of Syrian authority has been removed from Jerusalem.



and legitimization of the Hasmonaean family as the family in which the high priesthood was vested. This was done in the year 140 B.C., the third year of Simon's reign. First Maccabees records the question of the people, "How shall we thank Simon and his sons?"<sup>45</sup> First Maccabees tells us that Simon and his family, in accordance with the wishes of the populace was made high priest for ever, "until a trustworthy prophet should arise".<sup>46</sup> Simon was now the secular and priestly ruler of his people. A new high-priestly and princely dynasty, the Hasmonaeans was legally founded.

Neither Judas nor Jonathan was appointed as high priest by the people, possibly because of their scruples against a soldier being their high priest. Was Simon's election unanimous? It is very doubtful. Dissension must have occurred. Could one of the results of this dissension be the Qumran Community?<sup>47</sup>

Simon is portrayed as a well-meaning ruler, loved by all.<sup>48</sup> In the meantime Demetrius II was taken prisoner by the Parthians in 141 B.C. and Trypho was overthrown by the brother of Demetrius, Antiochus VII, Sidetes. Thus Sidetes was the sole selucid king. Sidetes made one attempt to reduce Simon but this failed. In 134 B.C. Simon was

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 14:25.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 14:26-49.

<sup>47</sup> Cf., The Encyclopaedia Britannica (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1959), vol. 13, p.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 14:4.



murdered by one of his own people - High Priesthood not with standing.<sup>49</sup> Simon was touring the country, checking on the fortifications, most likely preparing for a second round of battles with Sidetes. By this time Simon had turned over the forces to his three sons, John, Mattathias and Judas.<sup>50</sup> In the year 134 B.C. he arrived at Jericho with two of his sons, Mattathias and Judas. Ptolemy, the son of Abulus, had ambitious plans for himself and so he invited Simon and the two sons who were with him to a banquet. It would appear that Ptolemy either got them drunk or waited until they were, and had his men assassinate them.<sup>51</sup> Ptolemy sent his men to do away with the other son of Simon, John Hyrcanus. The plot failed to get John and he took over the position of high priest.<sup>52</sup> Simon was loved and his death was greatly mourned in Israel. This ends the story of the Maccabean Revolt. Not one of the Maccabean brothers died a natural death.

### Conclusion

With the death of Simon in 134 B.C., one moves beyond the foundation of the Qumran Community.<sup>53</sup> Simon was succeeded by his last remaining son, John Hyrcanus (134-104 B.C.). Israel prospered during

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 16:11-17.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 16:1-3.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 16:14-17.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 16:18-24.

<sup>53</sup> Cf., Chapter II, pp. 30.



his reign with the exception of one invasion by Antiochus VII, Sidetes. Also the Pharisees broke with him and then Hyrcanus turned to the Sadducees for friendship.<sup>54</sup> Upon his death, Hyrcanus was succeeded by his oldest son, Aristobulus (104-103 B.C.).

After the death of Aristobulus in 103 B.C., his widow Alexandra (Salome) married the oldest of his brothers, Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B.C.), and thus made him high priest and king. His reign was not peaceful, and was marked by six years of civil war with the Pharisees. He died in 76 B.C. while laying seige to a Greek city in Palestine.

Upon his death, he bequeathed his kingdom to his wife Alexandra.<sup>55</sup>

Alexandra ruled from 76-67 B.C. Her rule was marked by friendship with the Pharisees. She was a capable ruler and led Palestine well.<sup>56</sup>

Aristobulus II succeeded his mother, Alexandra, in 67 B.C. His rule was the last of the Hasmonaean family. Their rule ended in 63 B.C., when Pompey conquered Palestine. The father of Herod the Great, Antipater, was the man placed in charge of Palestine by the Romans. He was succeeded by his son, Herod the Great, who ruled from 37-4 B.C.

By now we have reached a very definite terminus ad quem as far as the origin of the Qumran Community is concerned. It was during the

<sup>54</sup> Josephus, Antiquities, XIII:X:6.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Ibid., XIII:XII-XV.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Ibid., XIII:XVI.



rule of Herod the Great that the great earthquake occurred which marked the change from phase I to phase 2 of the occupation of Khirbet Qumran.<sup>57</sup> Therefore, at this point, our history of Palestine for this Thesis must be ended.

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<sup>57</sup>  
Cf., chapter II, pp. 25f.



## CHAPTER IV

### GLEAMS TOWARD A SOLUTION

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to seek out from the extant literature of the monks those passages which will help in our quest for the origin of the Qumran Community. The aim of this chapter is not to find the origin, but rather to increase our knowledge of this Community so that when we consider all the data collected thus far, we may be in a position critically to consider some other scholar's views and then postulate one of our own. Naturally enough, space will not permit us to write down all we know about the Qumran Community from their literature. Rather, it must suffice to offer a general outline and then to give particular attention to those passages which appear to relate to their historical origins.

#### A Brief Description of the Life in the Qumran Community

The Qumran Community was unlike the Pharisees and Sadducees as we know them. Yet they resemble the Sadducees because of their strong emphasis on the priesthood. (There is no question that the priest rated high in their community.) On the other hand, they were unlike the Sadducees and more like the Pharisees, because of their eschatological and apocalyptic outlook.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>I shall assume that the Qumran Community were Essenes. Most scholars today concur with this viewpoint; e.g., Frank Moore Cross, Jr., and Father Milik. I shall defend my views in chapter V. Thus I will refer to Josephus and Philo when describing this Community.



The Qumran Community, according to Josephus, required a long period for admission. It was basically postulantship, novitiate, and full membership. In Josephus we read that the postulant had to undergo "the same method of living they use for a year, while he continues excluded".<sup>2</sup> The Manual of Discipline concurs with Josephus.<sup>3</sup> The candidate then enters a two-year period of his novitiate. At the end of this period, the Community then voted to admit or reject the candidate.<sup>4</sup>

The Community was organized in a strict hierarchical fashion. Every man had his place within the Community. Certain administrative functions were reserved for priests.<sup>5</sup> According to the Manual of Discipline, the covenant obligations were to be renewed each year.<sup>6</sup> There were still penalties for violation of the rules of the Community. To be ostracized from the rest of the group for a given period of time was the usual punishment. A monastic form of life was followed.

<sup>2</sup> Josephus, Bellum, II:VIII:7.

<sup>3</sup> Cf., Millar Burrows, The Dead Sea Scrolls (New York: Viking Press, 1955), p. 379.

<sup>4</sup> Cf., ibid.; cf., Bellum, loc. cit.

<sup>5</sup> Theodor H. Gaster, The Dead Sea Scripture (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1956), p. 58. For example, the Manual of Discipline 9,7 states that, "the priests alone are to have authority in all judicial and economic matters, and it is by their vote that the ranks of the various members of the Community are to be determined." cf., Bellum, op. cit., II:VIII:5.

<sup>6</sup> Gaster, op. cit., pp.41f.



Prayers were said at fixed hours of the day. In Josephus we read "that neither clamor nor other disturbance desecrate their house, but each allows the other to speak in his turn".<sup>7</sup> In the Manual of Discipline we read:

wherever there be ten men who have been formally enrolled in the community, one who is a priest is not to depart from them. When they sit in his presence, they are to take their places according to their respective ranks . . .<sup>8</sup>

Similarly, the priest is the person who blesses the food at mealtime.

The separateness of this sect cannot help but be noticed. There runs through their writings the thought that strangers will defile them.<sup>9</sup> Even in their admission ceremonies we have observed it took a person three years before he was accepted as a full member of the Community. We see this separateness in the communal meal of the Essenes.<sup>10</sup> The Manual of Discipline states that the novices were not to touch the drink of the full members.<sup>11</sup> Also we notice that the Manual of Discipline reads: a member -

<sup>7</sup> Bellum, loc. cit.

<sup>8</sup> Gaster, op. cit., p. 49.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 47f.

<sup>10</sup> Cf., ibid., p. 50f. It is not the purpose of this thesis to delve into the connection of this meal with the Eucharist of the Christian Church.

<sup>11</sup> Gaster, op. cit., p. 51.



. . . is not to eat or drink of anything that belongs to them nor to receive anything from them except cash . . . All their actions are as filth before Him, and He regards all their possessions as unclean.<sup>12</sup>

Ritual lustrations were also a part of the community as indeed the archaeological evidence would indicate.<sup>13</sup>

A further point of the separateness of the Qumran Community may be found in their attitude towards the sacrificial cult of Jerusalem. That the Qumran Community is a product of dissident priests from the House of Zadok may be safely assumed.<sup>14</sup> In Philo's On the Contemplative Life, chapter twelve, we read that the piety of the Essenes was expressed, not in the sacrifice of animals, but rather in the purity of the mind. Further, Josephus says that "when they send what they have dedicated to God into the temple, they do not offer sacrifices because they have more pure lustrations of their own . . ." and accordingly they engage in their worship separately.<sup>15</sup> We could

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 48. The pronoun them in the passage quoted refers to those outside the Community.

<sup>13</sup> Millar Burrows, More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls (New York: Viking Press, 1958), p. 372.

<sup>14</sup> Cf., chapter V, p. 102.

<sup>15</sup> Josephus, Antiquities, XVIII:I:5.



suppose here that the Qumran Community recognized the Jerusalem cult to the extent of sending gifts, but on the other hand they had their own services of worship.<sup>16</sup> It would appear from their writings that they did not regard the Jerusalem priests as true or worthy of their position.<sup>17</sup>

According to the Manual of Discipline, the Community regarded personal piety and prayer to be as worthy as the burnt sacrifice.<sup>18</sup>

In their eschatology, the Community considers that it will be the priestly community.<sup>19</sup> This marks the Qumran Community as a sect, if we consider a sect to be of the same nature as today's Jehovah's Witnesses. Like the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Qumran Community regarded itself as the true means to salvation in an age when the Devil reigned.

The Qumran Community also differed from their Jewish counterparts with regards to the calendar that was used. The Jerusalem temple used the lunar calendar, and the Qumran Community used a solar calendar. This seems to be in accord with the books of Jubilees and

<sup>16</sup> A problem is raised here for those who wish to identify the Qumran Community with the Essenes. The Community practised sacrifice, and thus it appears a contradiction has occurred. For a resolution of this problem the reader is referred to: F.M. Cross, Jr., The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1958), pp. 74ff.

<sup>17</sup> Cf., Gaster, op. cit., p. 68f. This passage from the Damascus Document implies that the Jerusalem priests perform their functions in vain.

<sup>18</sup> Cf., ibid., p. 57.

<sup>19</sup> Cf., ibid., p. 283.



Enoch of the pseudepigrapha. Fragments of both these books were found in the caves.<sup>20</sup> Further proof may be taken from the fact that the War Scroll tells us that the number of fathers of the Community is fifty-two, and that there shall be twenty-six major officials.<sup>21</sup>

There are also a great many points of theological differences to be found between this Qumran sect and their Jerusalem brethren, but these points will not be dealt with here as they shed little light upon their historical origins.<sup>22</sup> As with any sect, they had their own special theology.<sup>23</sup> One noticeable point is their change from Old Testament monotheism to an almost Persian-like dualism with reference to the Prince of Light and the Angel of Darkness.<sup>24</sup>

#### Historical Illusions in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Attention must now be given to the most important "historical" book found in the caves, the Commentary on the Book of Habbakkuk.

<sup>20</sup>The reader may compare Jubilees 6:22-38 and Enoch 7:10. Note also that reference is made to the book of Jubilees in the Damascus Document 16:3. This is not of major importance to this thesis.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 283.

<sup>22</sup>I feel that historical references made by the Qumran sect are of the utmost importance, and that these deserve priority. The above is a quick and brief resume of what the Qumran Community was like.

<sup>23</sup>Cf., Helmer Ringgren, The Faith of Qumran (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963).

<sup>24</sup>To ascertain the origin of the Qumran Community on the basis of their theology would be very risky because of the eclecticism which can be found throughout the middle east at that time. If the group did migrate to "the land of Damascus" as the Damascus Document would indicate, it is possible that these Persian aspects of their theology were assimilated during that time.



The Habbakkuk Commentary is exactly what the title says it is. Whoever wrote this work simply went verse by verse through the book and made an allegorical comment on the passage of Scripture. The writer seems to feel that the Book of Habbakkuk was written just for his particular period of time. Our task is to glean from this book the historical references which will help in our search. One must remember that these people are out in the wilderness for a reason. Something or someone caused them to take this drastic action. When the time comes to attempt the identification of the origin of the Qumran Community, it will be necessary to take into account the Teacher of Righteousness and the Wicked Priest. The priestly nature of this group has already been discussed. At first look, the Commentary of the Book of Habakkuk conveys the idea that a struggle has occurred.

Somehow, there has been a struggle for priestly power in the Jerusalem temple. Their leader whom they called the Teacher of Righteousness seemed to have lost out to a priestly leader upon whom they heaped scorn as the Wicked Priest. This was a priestly battle and the losers were the Qumran Community. They withdrew to the wilderness, called themselves the Sons of Zadok and the Sons of Light and set up their own sect, which soon became solidified with rules of conduct, liturgy, and priestly functions. Their leader, the Teacher of Righteousness, undoubtly had a very powerful effect upon the group and his teachings stayed with the group long after his death. The Kittim, referred to in the Habakkuk Commentary, appear to act as the



scourge of God in a world which is filled with Belial.<sup>25</sup> The Habakkuk Commentary starts out with the struggle.

"So the law is slacked." This means that they rejected the law of God. "And justice never goes forth, for the wicked man encompasses the righteous man." This means that the wicked man is the wicked priest, and the righteous man is the teacher of righteousness.<sup>26</sup>

In the Habakkuk Commentary 1:13, we find a reference made to the house of Absalom. This no doubt refers to the group of men who were opposed to the Teacher of Righteousness.

"Why do ye look on faithless men, but thou art silent at the swallowing by the wicked man of one more righteous than he?" This means the house of Absalom and the men of their party, who kept silence at the chastisement of the teacher of righteousness, and did not help him against the man of the lie, who rejected the law in the midst of their whole congregation.<sup>27</sup>

In this passage we gain some new information. Most likely the Man of the Lie equals the Wicked Priest. Also it would appear that a great breach of the Jewish Law was made in the eyes of the Community of Qumran. This same passage seems to be a reference to the killing of the Teacher of Righteousness or at least to attempt upon his life.

<sup>25</sup> For the time being, I am not considering the Kittim. I don't believe that the Kittim are involved in the past history of the Qumran Community, but rather they refer to the Romans. For an opposite view see, H.H. Rawley, The Zadokite Fragments and the Dead Sea Scrolls (Oxford: Blackwell, 1952), pp. 43ff.

<sup>26</sup> Burrows, The Dead Sea Scrolls, op.cit., p. 365.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 367.



Apparently the Teacher of Righteousness was an expounder of the Scriptures for in Habakkuk 2:2 we have the commentary "this means the Teacher of Righteousness to whom God made known all the mysteries of the words of his servants the prophets."<sup>28</sup> There is a further reference to the Wicked Priest in Habakkuk at 2:5.

"Moreover wealth is treacherous, an arrogant man, and will not abide. His greed is as wide as Sheol; and he like death has never enough. To him are gathered all the nations, and to him are assembled all the peoples. Shall not all of them take up their taunt against him, in scoffing derision of him, and say, "Woe to him who heaps up, but it is not his own! How long will he load himself with pledges?" This means the wicked priest, who was named according to the truth when he first book office; but when he had begun to rule in Israel, his heart was lifted up, and he forsook God and betrayed the statutes because of wealth. He plundered and assembled the wealth of men of violence who rebelled against God. He took the wealth of peoples, adding to himself iniquity and guilt; and ways of abominations he wrought, in all impurity of uncleanness.

"Will they not suddenly arise, those who torment you; will they not awake, those who torture you? Then you will be booty for them. Because you have plundered many nations, all the remainder of peoples will plunder you?" This means the priest who rebelled . . .

.....

his scourge with judgments of wickedness; and horrors of sore diseases they wrought in him, and vengeance in his body of flesh. And as for what it says, "Because you have plundered many nations, all the remnant of peoples will plunder you;" this means the last priests of Jerusalem, who assembled wealth and booty from the spoil of the peoples, but at the end of days their wealth with their spoil will be delivered into the hand of the army of the Kittim, for they are the remainder of the peoples. "For the blood of men and violence to the earth, to the city and all who dwell in it;"



this means the wicked priest, whom for the wrong done to the teacher of righteousness and the men of his party, God delivered into the hand of his enemies; afflicting him with a destroying scourge, in bitterness of soul, because he acted wickedly against his elect.<sup>29</sup>

This passage is quoted at length because of its great historical importance. In this selection we learn among other things, that the Wicked Priest seems to have been afflicted with a skin disease, and this Wicked Priest died having been betrayed into his enemies' hands. Also in this passage, the Kittim seems to be used here once again as the scourge of God. I have no doubt they are referring to the Romans who at this time were busy conquering many lands.<sup>30</sup>

The commentary on verse twelve raises once again the problem of whether or not the Preacher of the Lie or the Man of the Lie can be equated with the Wicked Priest. If so, it would appear that this person, whoever he is, founded a city.<sup>31</sup>

"Woe to him who builds a town in blood and founds a city in iniquity! Is it not, behold, from Yahweh of hosts that peoples labor only for fire, and nations weary themselves for naught?"

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., pp. 368 f. It should be noted that F.M. Cross, Jr. translates "with a destroying scourge" as "with a mortal blow". c.f. Cross, op. cit., p. 109. Cross believes this passage refers to the death of the Wicked Priest.

<sup>30</sup> This is no doubt the reason why the Qumran Community perished at the hands of the Romans. With such a mighty army subduing all, one could easily see how the Community saw them as the end of the world, the epitome of evil to be stopped only by the Qumran Community. In 68 A.D. the Community marched out fully expecting to defeat the Romans with God's help, but the Community was, of course, annihilated.

<sup>31</sup> Positive evidence is very difficult either way on this problem. However I agree with F.M. Cross, Jr. because I feel from the overall reading of their literature a second adversary of the sect is not distinguishable from the Wicked Priest.



This saying means the preacher of the lie, who enticed many to build a city of delusion in blood and to establish a congregation in falsehood for the sake of its honor, making many grow weary of the service of delusion and making them pregnant with works of falsehood, that their toil may be in vain, to the end that they may come into judgements of fire, because they reviled and insulted God's elect.<sup>32</sup>

The commentary on verses fifteen and sixteen of the second chapter of Habakkuk is as follows.

"Woe to him who makes his neighbors drink, who pours out his wrath; yea, he has made them drunk, to gaze on their festivals!" This means the wicked priest, who persecuted the teacher of righteousness in order to confound him in the indignation of his wrath, wishing to banish him; and at the time of their festival of rest, the day of atonement, he appeared to them to confound them and to make them stumble on the day of fasting, their Sabbath of rest.

"You are sated with ignominy instead of glory. Drink, you yourself, and stagger! The cup in the LORD's right hand will come around to you, and shame will come upon your glory!" This means the priest whose ignominy was greater than his glory, because he did not circumcise the foreskin of his heart, but walked in the ways of drunkenness, that his thirst might be removed. But the cup of the wrath of God will confound him, increasing his confusion. And the pain . . . .<sup>33</sup>

We have discussed in this chapter the probability that the Community used a solar calendar. According to the commentary on verse fifteen the Wicked Priest must have caused trouble for them on their day of Atonement. This would not be the Jerusalem day of Atonement. Secondly, could the commentary in verse sixteen be telling us how the Wicked Priest died?<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Burrows, The Dead Sea Scrolls, op. cit., p. 369.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., pp. 369f.

<sup>34</sup> Cf., chapter V, p. 105.



These are the most important passages from the Commentary on the book of Habakkuk. There is nothing complicated about the book; the only major problem in the book is to ascertain to what the historical passages refer.

The Commentary of the book of Nahum is very short and fragmentary. It covers only verses eleven to thirteen inclusive of chapter two. It is important because of this short passage which reads,

Demetrius; king of Greece, who tried to come to Jerusalem by the advice of the seekers of smooth things . . . frightened the kings of Greece from Antiochus until the rulers of the Kittim arose . . . This refers to the lion of wrath . . . by the seekers of smooth things, who hangs men alive . . .<sup>35</sup>

This passage is dealt with in detail in Chapter V.<sup>36</sup> It suffices here to say, that this appears to be a reference to Demetrius III and Alexander Jannaeus.

In the Damascus Document we find a reference to a period of wrath of three hundred and ninety years from the time of the Babylonian exile; and a further twenty years where "they remained like blind men groping their way", when God raised up for the pious "one who would teach the law correctly!"<sup>37</sup> Also in the Damascus Document we find the term Preacher of Lies and further use of the term Teacher of Righteousness. In the Damascus Document, we find this passage, "from

<sup>35</sup> Burrows, More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls, op. cit., p. 404.

<sup>36</sup> Cf., chapter V, pp. 97f.

<sup>37</sup> Gaster, op. cit., p. 61.



the day of the gathering in of the unique teacher until the annihilation of all the men of war who returned with the man of the lie will be about forty years".<sup>38</sup>

The Damascus Document gets its name because references are made to a covenant made in the Land of Damascus. Whether this is to be taken literally is still a subject of much debate.<sup>39</sup>

### Conclusion

With the exception of the Testimonia and the Commentary on Micah which is dealt with in the chapter, these are the major Dead Sea Scroll passages which make historical references to the origin of the Qumran Community. The task now, is to combine all the information thus gathered concerning the Qumran Community, and using it, to attempt to locate the origins of the Qumran Community.

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<sup>38</sup> Burrows, Dead Sea Scrolls, op. cit., p. 357.

<sup>39</sup> Cf., chapter V, p.107.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

#### Introduction

We have now come to the place where we must attempt to find the origins of the Qumran Community. We have gathered all the information needed to do this task. But first, we shall see what two scholars say about the origins of the Qumran Community, and then offer a criticism of these views.

#### H.H. Rowley and the Origin of the Qumran Community

Professor H.H. Rowley is at the University of Manchester where he is the professor of Hebrew. According to Dr. Rowley, the crucial passage is found in the Damascus Document where the rise of the sect is ascribed to a date three hundred and ninety years after the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. Thus from 586 B.C., we would arrive at the date 196 B.C. Rowley recognizes that this figure would only be approximate, and we must not reckon it to be too accurate. He then notes there was a further period of twenty years to the rise of the Teacher of Righteousness.<sup>1</sup> This, therefore, brings the time of the origin of the Qumran Community to 176 B.C. The length of rule of the Teacher of Righteousness is not specified, but we read

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<sup>1</sup> Cf., chapter IV, pp. 78f.



that forty years after he was "gathered in", the messianic age was to begin. Without relying too much on the accuracy of chronology, Rowley is prepared to look for the origins of the sect in the first half of the second century B.C. In the Jewish history of that time, Rowley sees the Teacher of Righteousness as Onias III, and the wicked priest as Menelaus. The Man of Scorn or the Man of the Lie is thought to be Antiochus Epiphanes IV.<sup>2</sup>

The position put forth by Rowley has much to make it attractive. For one thing, it is obvious that the Qumran Community did not like the prevailing priesthood at Jerusalem. They thought that their own priesthood was the legitimate one.<sup>3</sup> As we recall from chapter three, a change in the priesthood developed at this time. Jason outbid his brother, Onias III, for the priesthood. Jason was in turn outbid by Menelaus, a man who was not of the high priestly family. Second Maccabees gives us the impression that Onias was a just and honest man well worthy of his high office. We also know that Onias was treacherously murdered at the request of Menelaus.<sup>4</sup> Rowley finds the reference in the Habakkuk Commentary to the House of Absalom as referring to the Tobiads, a powerful house in Judaism at this time, who stood by and watched the legitimate high priest Onias III replaced

<sup>2</sup> H.H. Rowley, The Zadokite Fragments and the Dead Sea Scrolls (Oxford: Blackwell, 1952), pp. 62ff.

<sup>3</sup> Cf., chapter IV, pp. 70f.

<sup>4</sup> Cf., chapter III, pp. 50f.



by Jason and finally by the imposter Menelaus. It was Menelaus who allowed Antiochus IV to remove some of the temple wealth. It was also under Menelaus that the "abomination of desolation" took place which fits in with the Habakkuk Commentary text that the Wicked Priest did abominations in Jerusalem, defiled the sanctuary, and delivered the wealth into the hands of the Kittim.<sup>5</sup> Also Menelaus died a miserable death by being dropped from a height into a pile of ashes.<sup>6</sup> The Habakkuk Commentary also speaks of a Preacher of the Lie who built a city of delusion in blood. Rowley finds that Jerusalem was rebuilt with a strong wall.<sup>7</sup>

These in summary are the views of H.H. Rowley as to the origin of the sect. His views have much to commend them. It is good that he finds the origin as having started over a priestly quarrel, and there is no question as to who is the legitimate priest. There is no doubt that feelings ran high in Judaism at this time demanding that the high priest come from the high priestly family.<sup>8</sup> The chronological

<sup>5</sup>

Cf., chapter IV, p. 75.

<sup>6</sup>

Cf., II Maccabees 13:3ff.

<sup>7</sup>

Cf., I Maccabees 1:33.

<sup>8</sup>We notice in I Maccabees 7:14 that the scribes were happy in that they now had Alcimus, who was of the line of Aaron, to be their high priest. It is also safe to assume that the scribes, mentioned in this passage, were part of the Hasidim of Israel who were only interested in their religious freedom.



placement of his theory must be commended. Rowley is certainly much more realistic in placing the origin around 175-170 B.C. than around 68 A.D. as some scholars do.<sup>9</sup> At first look, the theory of Rowley is good and indeed could be correct. However, we believe that his theory has two great faults. The most important fault is his choice of Onias III as the Teacher of Righteousness. That Onias was persecuted is not to be denied, but to say that he led some sort of major resistance movement against the prevailing high priest is stretching a point. It must be remembered that with Alcimus, the line of Aaron was restored.<sup>10</sup> In Jewish tradition, Onias was a righteous man, but to choose Onias III as the Teacher of Righteousness or account of this tradition is not good enough. Secondly, the evidence of archaeology is not in agreement. According to the evidence, the community of Qumran was not set up until at least 140 B.C. Most likely, it was set up some where between 140-120 B.C. This would leave nearly fifty years for which to account. Granted, one could quote the Damascus Document and claim that for this period the group sojourned in the "land of Damascus". However, it seems unlikely that the group was there that long, even if we are to take this sojourn literally.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Millar Burrows, More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls, (New York: Viking Press, 1958), pp. 228ff. Scholars such as Del Medico and Schonfield would place the date for the origin of the Community around 68-70 A.D. However, attempts of this nature are not worthy of serious scholarly attention. The evidence of archaeology is completely against them.

<sup>10</sup> I Maccabees 7:14.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Charles T. Fritsch, "Herod the Great and the Qumran Community", Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXIV (September 1955), pp. 173-181. Fritsch in this short article claims the sojourn to Damascus occurred during the time of Herod the Great and some time after the destruction of the Community's buildings by the earthquake in 31 B.C. cf., chapter IV, p. 79.



To choose Menelaus as a Wicked Priest is certainly very logical, for there is no doubt that Menelaus was not a good priest. Menelaus did die a horrible death, but we do have some difficulty in ascribing the "horrors of sore diseases" to him, at the very least there is no explicit record of such horrors ever actually having come upon Menelaus.<sup>12</sup>

Rowley distinguishes between the Man of the Lie and the Wicked Priest. Possibly this leaves something to be desired. There is not any textual evidence to indicate that they were two different people.

To place the origin of the Qumran Community in a pre-Maccabean period is an interesting view-point but it must be rejected. In the meantime, a better explanation must be sought out, - one in which the archaeological evidence will more strongly support.

#### F.F. Bruce and the Origin of the Qumran Community.

The next theory that should be considered is that of Professor F.F. Bruce, who is the Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis in the University of Manchester. We have chosen Professor Bruce's opinion because it represents an important and interesting possibility. It should be mentioned at the outset that Dr. Bruce gives full credence to the theory of Rowley. He in no way ridicules the man's position; in fact he considers it second best to his own opinion.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Cf., chapter III, pp.13f.; cf., chapter IV, p. 75.

<sup>13</sup> F.F. Bruce, The Teacher of Righteousness in the Qumran Texts (London: The Tyndale Press, 1956), pp. 16ff.



Like Towley, Bruce considers the Teacher of Righteousness to be an historical person: to be more specific a person whom the Qumran Community believed to be the person who was the forerunner of the Messianic age, - a forerunner, but not the Messiah! The Wicked Priest was the great adversary of the Teacher of Righteousness. Bruce finds it easier to try to identify the Wicked Priest. This he says is Alexander Jannaeus who was king and high priest of the Jews from 103 B.C. to his death in 76 B.C.

Jannaeus also appears to be a good choice because he was noted for his drunkenness, love of luxury, immorality, and love of riches.<sup>14</sup> The statement that the Wicked Priest was delivered into the hands of his enemies in the Habakkuk Commentary is taken to mean the disastrous defeat of Alexander Jannaeus by the Nabataeans in which he barely escaped with his life.<sup>15</sup> Further proof is offered by the fact that thirteen years after his death, Judea became a tributary of Rome. This appears to fulfill the prophecy found in the Habakkuk Commentary that their spoil will be delivered into the hands of the army of the Kittim.<sup>16</sup> The Wicked Priest was known for his drinking, and the Habakkuk Commentary remarks that the Wicked Priest walked in the ways of drunkenness.<sup>17</sup> Josephus reports to us that Jannaeus had a

<sup>14</sup> Cf., Josephus, Antiquities, XIII:XII-XV.

<sup>15</sup> Cf., chapter IV, p. 75.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 13.



distressing bodily ailment. The Habakkuk Commentary notes that the Wicked Priest suffered from the horrors of sore diseases.<sup>18</sup> Further, Jannaeus had a riot on his hands when he presided at the feast of the tabernacles and subsequently burned many worshippers against him.<sup>19</sup> This is seen as referring to the remark in the Habakkuk Commentary which claims that the Wicked Priest "rejected the law in the midst of the entire congregation".<sup>20</sup> During this time, we know that the breach became absolute between the Hasmonaeans and the Pharisees.<sup>21</sup> Bruce finds it possible that Jannaeus' attack on the rabbis could be enough of a cause for the Qumran Community to withdraw into the wilderness. He quotes the Talmud to back his theory.<sup>22</sup>

Bruce also believes the Man of the Lie to be different from the Wicked Priest. He finds the Man of the Lie to be the leader of a rival religious movement who, in the eyes of the Teacher of Righteousness, "led the simple away". He arrives at this hypothesis by an interpolation of a lacuna in the first line of the Commentary

<sup>18</sup> Chapter IV, p. 75.

<sup>19</sup> Antiquities, loc. cit.

<sup>20</sup> Cf., chapter IV, p. 74.

<sup>21</sup> Cf., chapter III, p. 65.

<sup>22</sup> Bruce, op. cit., p. 23.



on Micah (1Qp Micah). In translation, it reads, "this means the prophet of the lie . . . simple. Bruce's interpolation reads "who leads astray the". To add to this dubious interpolation, he quotes from the Damascus Document; namely "when arose the man of scorn who preached to Israel lying words, and led them astray in a tractless wilderness".<sup>23</sup> This seems to be a very dubious means of separating the Man of the Lie from the Wicked Priest.

The "House of Absalom", he says, refers to a particular unknown group of people called thus because the writer of the Habakkuk Commentary found similarity between their behaviour and Absalom, the son of David, who "stole the hearts of the men of Israel".<sup>24</sup>

Bruce, however, makes no identification of the Teacher of Righteousness. He mentions two people who might be considered, - Onias, a pious Jew, who was stoned to death just before the Roman Conquest of 63 B.C., of Judah, mentioned by Josephus in his Bellum and Antiquities.<sup>25</sup>

A major criticism of Bruce's theory is that it lacks a good reason for the Qumran Community's separation from the rest of Jewry. An attack on some rabbis is just not good enough, The Qumran Community was priestly; rabbis were not priests. For a group to separate themselves

<sup>23</sup> Bruce, op. cit., pp. 25f.

<sup>24</sup> II Samuel 15:6.; Bruce, op. cit., pp. 26f.

<sup>25</sup> Bruce, op. cit., pp. 27.



from the rest of Jewry, a very strong motivation is needed. Bruce does not provide this motivation. We can not be impressed with Bruce's separation of the Wicked Priest from the Man of the Lie. His interpolation is indeed very dubious. To be sure, one cannot help but be impressed with Alexander Jannaeus as the Wicked Priest. Accounts of his character seem to fit nicely with the Qumran Community's polemis against his character.

The major problem to the theory that Alexander Jannaeus was the Wicked Priest is that there is something amiss between the coin record found at Qumran and between the time when Jannaeus began to rule; i.e., 103 B.C.<sup>26</sup> F.M. Cross, Jr. places the dates for occupation at Qumran between 140-120 B.C.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, if we say that Jannaeus was the Wicked Priest, then we assume that the Community had formed itself for a number of years, and afterwards had its quarrel between its leader, the Teacher of Righteousness, and the Wicked Priest. This is possible, but it does not leave us with a reason for the Community's exodus to the wilderness. One of the safest conclusions to draw from the reading of the Dead Sea Scrolls is that the Community was formed as a result of the quarrel between the Teacher of Righteousness

<sup>26</sup>

Cf., chapter II, p. 30.

<sup>27</sup>

Frank Moore Cross, Jr., "The Early History of the Qumran Community", McCormick Quarterly, XXI (March 1968), p. 250. Certainly much of the argument of this thesis depends upon the time of formation at Qumran, but I firmly believe that Cross is correct when he places the probable dates between 140-120 B.C. i.e., before the time of Jannaeus.



and the Wicked Priest and that the Habakkuk Commentary was written as a sort of apologia for the Community's existance. It is incorrect to have the quarrel after the formation of the Community. We therefore, believe that the archeological evidence and motivation rule out Alexander Jannaeus as the Wicked Priest.

### The Origin of the Qumran Community

The time has now come to hypothesize anew about the origin of the Qumran Community. In chapter II the people who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls and the people who occupied the buildings during periods 1 and 2 were identified as the same.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, in our search for the origins of the people who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls, we may use the archaeological evidence of the Khirbet Qumran Site.<sup>29</sup> Of this evidence, the most important is the coin record. The lack of coins earlier than the reign of Antiochus (Sidetes) VII and John Hyrcanus makes it very difficult to locate the starting of the occupation before 138 B.C. As F.M. Cross, Jr. reasons, it is very difficult to make the outside limits anymore than 150-100 B.C., and then to be more accurate, he puts the limits at 140-120 B.C.<sup>30</sup> When one defines

<sup>28</sup>

Cf., chapter II, p. 32.

<sup>29</sup>

An obvious, yet most essential point.

<sup>30</sup>

Cross, loc. cit.



these limits, one does not mean that the buildings were erected by that particular time, but rather that the site was being used by the originators of the Qumran Community. Most likely, period 1a was a time of living in shacks and tents.<sup>31</sup> In the phase 1b, the community took its permanent form until the earthquake in 31 B.C. The coin record would suggest that the major period of construction took place during the reign of Alexander Jannaeus.<sup>32</sup>

Having established a date of origin by our primary source, the coin record, we must now look to the other sources, discussed in chapter two, to ascertain if they will conflict with our original dating. The linen, in which a scroll was found, gave a radio-carbon dating of 33 A.D., plus or minus two hundred years.<sup>33</sup> This does not conflict because it tells us the scrolls could have been written between 150 B.C. and 68 A.D.; i.e., some time between our founding date and the date which we set for the destruction of the community.<sup>34</sup>

Pottery is another method of dating ruins. As reported in chapter two, the pottery found at period 1b is similar to pottery

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<sup>31</sup>Cf., chapter II, p. 25.

<sup>32</sup>Cf., chapter II, p. 30.

<sup>33</sup>Cf., ibid., p. 35.

<sup>34</sup>Cf., ibid., pp. 33f.



found in caves which date from the time of Herod the Great. Of course, there is no point in trying to be accurate to any one decade but it does not conflict with our original dating.<sup>35</sup>

Millar Burrows concludes, from paleographical arguments, that the scrolls were written sometime between 300 B.C. and 68 A.D.<sup>36</sup> Not all the Dead Sea Scrolls need to have been written at Khirbet Qumran. Many could have been brought by the Community when they went out into the desert. None the less, the paleographical argument does not refute our original dating. We have previously stated that trying to date the scrolls by grammatical arguments proves to be inconclusive, yet about the turn of the era seems to give an approximate answer.<sup>37</sup>

The coin record is extremely important, and there is nothing in the rest of the archaeological arguments which would dispute a date of origin between 140-120 B.C. In fact, putting together the arguments of paleography, pottery, grammar, and the radio-carbon dating, we seem to be getting evidence that between 100 B.C. and 68 A.D. we have a thriving community, no longer fighting for survival in tents but able

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 7.; and cf., Burrows, Dead Sea Scrolls, op. cit., pp. 78f.

<sup>36</sup> Cf., chapter II, p. 36.

<sup>37</sup> Cf., Frank Moore Cross, Jr., The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1958), pp. 251-253. Cross gives a precise dating to these manuscripts which would give more evidence to our original dating, but one can weaken an argument by being too narrow in a much disputed field. Cross dates the Commentaries on Habakkuk and Naum in the second half of the first century B.C.



to find time for the art of pottery making and the art of writing. No community arises overnight, and it takes time to build. It is very logical that these people would have had to live under more primitive structures, structures that leave little archaeological evidence, before they had the resources to build their elaborate stone building at Khirbet Qumran. A community needs a certain amount of wealth before it can devote itself to the arts, such as composing and writing. It would be reasonable to assume that the Community was writing its own texts by the end of the second century B.C. Before, say 120 B.C., the Community would be too much concerned with survival.

In chapters two and four, the connection between the Qumran Community and the Essenes has been mentioned. The time has come when the Qumran Community must be identified as Essenes. The best argument for making the identification is that there were three basic Jewish sectarian groups that we know of in Palestine around the turn of the era. The Qumran Community was not Sadducean because they did not sacrifice at the temple in Jerusalem. They may have been Sadducees, but at Qumran they know longer could be. As mentioned in chapter four, the Qumran Community was too priestly to be Pharisees.<sup>38</sup> And moreover, the Pharisees were the lay leaders in their various Palestinian communities. Pharisees were not separatists in the sense that they would withdraw from their communities, and enter a desert retreat.

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Cf., chapter IV, p. 1.



Thus we are left with the Essenes. They are the separatists. They are the group that would be radical enough to consider themselves as the true Israel, and sever almost all connections with their fellow Jews, even to the point of starving to death, rather than eat the food of those outside their community.<sup>39</sup>

Those who do not believe that the Qumran Community was Essene try to show that the classical accounts of the Essenes -- Josephus and Philo -- differ from the accounts found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. There are very few scholars who would agree with this theory. Millar Burrows is perhaps one of the leading scholars who will not connect the Essenes with the Qumran Community. We can see no reason not to call the Qumran Community "the Essenes of Qumran".<sup>40</sup> Most scholars feel that most of the differences can be explained. Even more than this, it must be remembered that Josephus was writing an apology for the Jews to the Romans. Under no account would he report of a Teacher of Righteousness as a forerunner to a Messiah. Josephus' account of the Essenes reads like a travel dialogue. One can always recall listening to a friend who has travelled to a foreign country make incorrect statements concerning that country. Classical writers

<sup>39</sup> Josephus, Bellum, II:VIII:8.

<sup>40</sup> The reader is referred to Burrows, The Dead Sea Scrolls, op. cit., pp. 273-298; and to Burrows, More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls, op. cit., pp. 263-274; and to Kurt Schubert, The Dead Sea Community (New York: Harper, 1959), pp. 75ff. These references give a full account of the differences between the classical writers, and what is found in the scrolls. cf., chapter II, pp. 1f.



did not have the same zeal for accuracy that we have today. The argument presented in chapter two concerning Father Milik's discussion of Pliny is a very good argument.<sup>41</sup> We know of no other settlement near the shores of the Dead Sea to which Pliny could be referring. It has been remarked that the Qumran Community could not be Sadducean or Pharisean as we know them.<sup>42</sup> According to Josephus, we know that there were Essenes in the cities and towns of Palestine.<sup>43</sup> It cannot be claimed, therefore, that the Qumran Community was the only place where one could find Essenes. However, it could be very possible that the Qumran Community formed the headquarters for all the Essenes in Palestine. This was no ephemeral center. If it were, the Romans probably would not have bothered to destroy it in the manner in which they did. The Qumran Community must have caused the Romans trouble.<sup>44</sup> I feel that F.M. Cross, Jr. has the strongest argument for identifying the Qumran Community as Essenes.<sup>45</sup>

In summary, he says that those who claim that the Qumran Community was not Essenes put themselves in the astonishing position

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<sup>41</sup> Cf., chapter II, pp. 1f.

<sup>42</sup> Cf., supra.

<sup>43</sup> Josephus, Bellum, II:VIII:4.

<sup>44</sup> If a Roman general had ever read their War Scroll, he would have been given cause for attacking the settlement.

<sup>45</sup> Cross, "The Early History of the Qumran Community, op. cit.," p. 254.



of saying that two major groups lived side by side in the same region of the desert, performing similar or rather identical lustrations, eating communal meals, and holding bizarre views. This person has to suppose that one group completely disappeared without a known trace, while the other, completely unmentioned by classical authors, left behind extensive ruins and a great library.<sup>46</sup>

Like Cross, I prefer to call the Qumran Community "Essenes". It could be that sometime in the future, somebody may disprove this theory, but at the present time this seems unlikely.<sup>47</sup>

Thus having settled the question of the approximate time the Essenes of Qumran began their settlement, and having given an answer to the question of whether or not the Qumran Community was Essene, we must now proceede with an examination of the materials of chapters three and four. We must view the historical references made in the Dead Sea Scrolls, and then see if some identification can be made from the historical facts as we know them.

In our search, we must remember that a large group of people do not go out into the desert for little or no reason. Something or someone must have caused them to take this drastic action. The Essenes of Qumran considered themselves to be the true Israel as opposed to those Jews who continued to worship at the temple in Jerusalem.

<sup>46</sup> Cf., chapter II, pp. lff.

<sup>47</sup> This identification having been made, one can use both the Dead Sea Scrolls and the writings of Pliny and Josephus when discussing the Qumran Community.



When one reads the Habakkuk Commentary, one gets the feeling an ideological split must have occurred. Something in the affairs of the Jerusalem priesthood caused a disagreement. The fight was priestly in nature because the dissenters retained a state of high honor for the priesthood. Through the Community's literature runs a concern for the proper priestly functions; i.e., ceremony, liturgy, feasts, and so on. The Qumran Essenes called themselves the Sons of Zadok, but they had no use for the Jerusalem priesthood. Why not? This is a crucial question in our search for the origin of the Qumran Community. Could the scorn that the Qumran Community had for the Jerusalem priesthood be the reason for their separation? Is this enough of a motivation to cause a group of people to separate themselves from the rest of the world, and wait for the coming Messianic age?

This hatred for the Jerusalem priesthood seems to be heaped upon one man, the Wicked Priest. It was the Wicked Priest who tired to take the life of their leader, the Teacher of Righteousness.<sup>48</sup> Even when the Community had departed from Jerusalem, the Wicked Priest caused a great upset on their Day of Atonement.<sup>49</sup>

Therefore, in our search for the origin of the group, let us begin by trying to identify the Wicked Priest. In the figure of the

<sup>48</sup> Cf., chapter IV, pp. 74f.

<sup>49</sup> Cf., chapter IV, p. 77.



Wicked Priest, we should also be able to get a motivation for the separation of the Qumran Essenes.

Two possible candidates for the dubious honor of being the Wicked Priest have already been mentioned, Alexander Jannaeus and Menelaus. Of the two, as previously mentioned, we must rule out Jannaeus because of the time factor. Archeological evidence would suggest that the Community already had its origin before the rule of Jannaeus.<sup>50</sup> However, one cannot definitely rule out Jannaeus until one has dealt with the passage mentioned in chapter four from the Nahum Commentary.<sup>51</sup> Cross says, in effect, that there is no doubt that the Demetrius referred to in this passage is indeed Demetrius II, who was invited by the Pharisees to remove Alexander Jannaeus from his throne in 88 B.C.<sup>52</sup> The "wrathful lion" referred to is indeed Alexander Jannaeus, who was known for his mass crucifixions, and thus the reference to hanging men while alive.<sup>53</sup> Cross rightly observes that nowhere in the Nahum Commentary do we find a reference to the Teacher of Righteousness or the Wicked Priest.<sup>54</sup> The Commentary is only a

<sup>50</sup> Cf., chapter II, pp. 30ff.

<sup>51</sup> Chapter IV, p. 78.

<sup>52</sup> Josephus, Bellum, I:IV:4.

<sup>53</sup> Josephus, Bellum, I:V:3.

<sup>54</sup> Cross, "The Early History of the Qumran Community", op. cit., pp. 258f.



fragmented fragment, and, therefore, it would be wrong to assume that it refers to the original struggles of the Qumran Community. The writings of Josephus tell us Jannaeus had trouble with the Pharisees during his reign.<sup>55</sup> The civil war of the Pharisees and the asking of Demetrius for support does not give a good reason for the Essenes to separate, even though it is highly probable that both groups had their origins in the older Hasidic congregation. So, while this passage does not provide an argument for Jannaeus as the Wicked Priest, it could supply a clue in our search. Cross rightly claims that this passage gives us a terminus ad quem for the foundation of the sect.<sup>56</sup> Alexander Jannaeus is not a good choice for the Wicked Priest.

H.H. Rowley's suggestion of Menelaus for the Wicked Priest is more convincing because Menelaus was indeed a wicked priest. We know that Menelaus had Onias murdered.<sup>57</sup> But as previously mentioned in this chapter, the dating is just too early for Menelaus to be the Wicked Priest. The evidence of archaeology must not be ignored.

Thus it has been established that Bruce is too late in his dating, and Rowley is too early. Our archeological evidence tells

<sup>55</sup> Chapter III, p. 65.

<sup>56</sup> Cross, "The Early History of the Qumran Community", op. cit., p. 259. Cross claims that this event occurred after the group had arrived at Khirbet Qumran, and thus they wrote about it while they were out in the desert.

<sup>57</sup> Chapter III, p. 50.



us to look for the origin of the Qumran Community sometime between 140-120 B.C. We must therefore, look closely at the history of Palestine around that time.<sup>58</sup> A good place to start is the Maccabean Revolt. It was a revolt of pious and loyal Jews who wanted to regain their religious freedom. As we learned in chapter three, the revolt started out with honorable intentions; its ideals and motives were at the highest level. We saw how there was a group of people called the Hasideans who were happy just to have their religious freedom.<sup>59</sup> They were happy to have Alcimus as their High Priest because he was from a high priestly family. The Hasideans made an allegiance with Alcimus which appears to be a pact of mutual peace and trust.<sup>60</sup> What we have occurring here is a split in the ranks of the orthodox Jews; i.e., those who fought for their religious freedom. Therefore, it is logical to assume that there were Jews loyal to Alcimus, but not enthusiastic about the political aims of the Maccabees.

As we know, the Maccabean revolt continued, and Judas died.<sup>61</sup> Jonathan took over, and was made High Priest.<sup>62</sup> We have noted above

<sup>58</sup>Cf., chapter III.

<sup>59</sup>Chapter III, pp. 54ff. Note that Hasideans is the same word as Hasidim.

<sup>60</sup>I Maccabees 7:16-18. This passage would indicate to us that as soon as the pact was made, some sixty of the Hasideans (Hasidim) were killed. This would appear to be an exaggeration on the part of the biased pro-Maccabean writer. I feel that it is safe to conclude that the Maccabean revolt did not enjoy complete support from every pious Jew.

<sup>61</sup>Chapter III, p. 56.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., pp. 56 ff.



that the Hasidim were pacified when Alcimus was made High Priest. Jonathan was of a priestly family, but not of a high priestly family. It is reasonable to assume that the Hasidim would oppose this move. Therefore, Jonathan can be posed as a possible choice for the Wicked Priest.

Simon would also make a good Wicked Priest. It was Simon who administered the "coup de grace". Simon succeeded Jonathan as the ruler and high priest of Israel. Simon got complete political freedom for Israel, and therefore had time to worry about other matters. Simon made the Hasmonaean house the hereditary line for high priests, "until a trustworthy prophet should arise".<sup>63</sup> This phrase is important because it may have been used to placate certain elements in Israel, for the Hasmonaean house was not of high priestly lineage. To the devout Jew, this would not be acceptable. To the writer of the First Book of Maccabees, this was a glorious occasion. He certainly wouldn't record a minor scuffling of opposition. But, there can be no doubt that some priests in the Hasidic party did not like this official proclamation.

Let us now consider closely Jonathan and Simon for the role of the Wicked Priest. In one of these two people, we will find the Wicked Priest. Most importantly, they both fit into the time-scheme supplied by our archeological evidence for the time of establishment of the Qumran Community at Khirbet Qumran, although Simon does fit in a little better.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 63.

<sup>64</sup>Chapter II, pp. 30ff.



There are some points in favor of Jonathan being chosen as the Wicked Priest. He was the first to take over the position of High Priest. Certainly, some of the Hasidim would be opposed to this appointment.<sup>65</sup> Jonathan's death at the hands of his enemies fits the description of the death of the Wicked Priest in the Habakkuk Commentary.<sup>66</sup> This is really all that we can say about Jonathan being the Wicked Priest. Simon makes a better Wicked Priest. Most likely, the opposition of the Teacher of Righteousness to the Hasmonaean high priesthood started during the reign of Jonathan, but Jonathan was not the Wicked Priest.

Simon is the best candidate for the role of the Wicked Priest. His period of reign fits in much better with the findings of archeology. His reign began in 142 B.C. and ended in 134 B.C. with his murder at Jericho. The arguments all favor Simon. We have the motivation needed for the withdrawal of the Qumran Essenes from Jerusalem by virtue of Simon's proclamation of 140 B.C.<sup>67</sup> Undoubtedly, the Teacher of Righteousness voiced his opposition to this proclamation too loudly, and was forced to flee for his life from Jerusalem. His followers would go with him.

<sup>65</sup>  
Chapter III, pp. 57f.

<sup>66</sup>  
Cf., chapter III, p. 61; also, cf., ante, chapter IV, p. 75..

<sup>67</sup>  
Cf. supra, p. 100.



Secondly, as Cross points out very clearly, the illegitimacy of Simon's house is hinted at in the phrase,

'until a faithful prophet arise', that is until a final arbiter between the rival houses appears in the age to come. Further, the decree warned against any opposition to Simon by layman or priest, prohibited private assembly, and threatened punishment to anyone.<sup>68</sup>

It is reasonable to assume that the Zadokite priesthood, or at least some of them, would be unhappy about this proclamation. It was after this proclamation that the dissenting Zadokite priests took some of their followers and fled to "Damascus"; i.e., out of the territory of Simon, - to escape the decreed punishment. The group then returned after a period of time, and set up their temporary structures at Khirbet Qumran (phase 1a),<sup>69</sup> or they developed into a flourishing community with headquarters at Qumran.

The Habakkuk Commentary is constantly referring to the conflict between the Wicked Priest and the Teacher of Righteousness. It speaks of the wrong doings of the Wicked Priest and how he, "rejected the Law in the midst of the whole congregation".<sup>70</sup> This could well be a reference to the proclamation of 140 B.C. Also of importance, is the Habakkuk Commentary's remark that the Wicked Priest ruled Israel, but is condemned

<sup>68</sup>

Cross, The Early History of the Qumran Community, op. cit., p. 263.

<sup>69</sup>

Chapter II, p. 25.

<sup>70</sup>

Chapter IV, pp. 74.



because he forsook the statutes of God.<sup>71</sup> One could say that this meant only the rule of a high priest, but it seems more likely that the Wicked Priest was also a secular ruler. This greatly weighs the case in favour of Simon.

Yet another argument in favour of Simon is given in convincing manner by F.M. Cross, Jr.<sup>72</sup> Cross finds that the List of Testimonia from Cave IV, contains certain historical references. This document contains four quotations, three from the Bible, and the fourth from a pseudepigraphical work, the Psalms of Joshua. The first quotation records the prophecy of a coming prophet like Moses.<sup>73</sup> Cross says this refers to the eschatological Prophet expected by the Essenes. The second quotation refers to the Star of Jacob, and the Scepter of Israel; i.e., the priestly Messiah and the royal Messiah.<sup>74</sup> The third is taken from the blessing of Moses on Levi, " . . . for he guarded thy word and guarded thy covenant; and he taught [or illuminated] thy judgments to Jacob, thy teaching (Torah) to Israel."<sup>75</sup> Cross

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., pp. 74f.

<sup>72</sup>

Cross, "The Early History of the Qumran Community", op. cit., pp. 259-261. The full argument, which is listed below, may be found on these pages.

<sup>73</sup> Deuteronomy 18:18.

<sup>74</sup> Numbers 24:17.

<sup>75</sup>

Cross, "The early History of the Qumran Community", op. cit., pp. 259f.



points out that these words are applicable to a priestly teacher and most likely apply to the Teacher of Righteousness.

The fourth Testimonium is the most important and refers to the "Cursed One" predicted in Joshua 6:26, and elaborated upon in the Psalms of Joshua. Cross reasons that the first three testimonia refer to the Messianic prophet, priest, and prince, the priestly forerunner of the new age who founded the sect. Could it be that the Cursed One refers to the sect's arch-enemy, a figure put in juxtaposition with the Teacher of Righteousness? The text goes as follows:

"and behold an accursed man, a son of Belial, shall come to power to be a trapper's snare and ruin to all his neighbors, and he shall come to power and [his sons] . . . [with him] (partially reconstructed), the two of them becoming violent instruments. And they shall build again the [city . . .] and set up a wall and towers for it to make a stronghold of wickedness . . . ."<sup>76</sup>

As we know, this curse of Joshua was carried though when a man named Hiel rebuilt Jericho, and lost his two sons.<sup>77</sup> Cross asks why the Qumran Essenes chose to re-apply this curse to their own time. Simon was murdered along with his two sons while checking the fortifications of Jericho.<sup>78</sup> If one accepts this passage as applying to Simon and his sons, Judas and Mattathias (his youngest), then this is a very weighty argument in favour of Simon being the Wicked Priest.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 260.

<sup>77</sup> I Kings 16:34.

<sup>78</sup> Cf., chapter III, p. 29.; and Cross, "The Early History of the Qumran Community", op. cit., p. 64.



In Chapter IV, a quote was given from the Habakkuk Commentary which reads: ". . . but (the Wicked Priest) walked the ways of drunkenness . . . but the cup of the wrath of God will confound him (or swallow him up) . . ."<sup>79</sup> Could this refer to Simon's death at the hands of the Idumaean Ptolemy? I think it could. Simon died at a banquet while he was drinking. Most likely Simon and his two sons were drunk when they were murdered at Jericho. The events of Simon's death are in accord with the Habakkuk Commentary's remark that the Wicked Priest was delivered into the hands of his enemies.<sup>80</sup>

The greatest problem in identifying Simon as the Wicked Priest is caused by the fact that we have no record of Simon ever being afflicted with "the horrors of sore diseases".<sup>81</sup> However, in view of the weighty evidence in favour of Simon, it must be concluded that Simon is indeed the Wicked Priest.

This leaves us with the identification of the Teacher of Righteousness. A firm identification of the Teacher of Righteousness is given by H.H. Rowley who, as we know, chose Onias III.<sup>82</sup> We do not feel that the Teacher of Righteousness can be identified by name. But

<sup>79</sup> Cf., ibid., p. 264.; Chapter IV, p. 77.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., pp. 75f.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>82</sup> Cf., supra, pp. 1ff.



if our above theory holds true; namely, that the separation occurred with the Proclamation of 140 B.C., then it would be most logical to say the Teacher of Righteousness was a dissentient Zadokite priest who could not accept the Hasmonaean family as the hereditary high priests. Most likely, he voiced his disapproval once too often and was compelled to flee for his life with his followers. They may have gone to "Damascus" for a short period of time.<sup>83</sup> When John Hyrcanus came to power (134 B.C.), they retired to Khirbet Qumran where they remained separate from the rest of the evil world, and set up a priestly community with its own peculiar theology.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Cf., *supra*, p. 101.

<sup>84</sup> Theological beliefs such as the Sons of Light versus Sons of Darkness, which is dualistic, could very well have been assimilated by the Community while they were in, or near, Damascus, and thus subject to Persian influence. Cf., chapter I, pp. 14ff.; chapter IV, pp. 78f.



### Conclusion

At last we come to the end of our search for the origins of the Qumran Community. This search has opened up many new areas of research which could only be briefly mentioned in passing. One such area of major importance concerns the origins of the theology of the Qumran Community. There appears to be more research needed to solve the problem of how the Qumran Community combined Pharisaic Apocalypticism with their Sadducean emphasis on the priesthood. No doubt some student will take up this challenge in some later thesis. The debate over whether or not the Qumran Community was Essene will carry on for many years. Maybe it will never be resolved to the satisfaction of all scholars. Debates such as this will keep the study of the Qumran Community alive and invigorating for many years to come.

In brief summary, it is held that Simon was the Wicked Priest or Man of the Lie; and the Teacher of Righteousness was a dissentient Zadokite priest who is better left unnamed. The Community fled because of their opposition to the decree of Simon's in 140 B.C. It is further held that no conclusion can be reached on the question of what is meant by "Damascus". Some scholars will take it literally, while others will say that it is a term used to mean the Jeshimon of Judah. However one may answer this question according to the evidence of archeology, the Qumran Community was set up sometime between 140-120 B.C.

The men of Qumran were men of deep convictions and strong character who were ready to die for what they believed. As a tribute



to the men of Qumran, this thesis closes with the Blessing of the Chief Priest of Qumran.

. . . may he (i.e. the Lord) make you glad and be gracious to you . . . May he be gracious to you with a spirit of holiness and steadfast love . . . and may he graciously grant you an eternal covenant and . . . and may he be gracious to you with righteous judgment . . . and may he be gracious to you in all your works . . . with eternal truth on all your descendants.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>85</sup>

Burrows, More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls, op. cit., p. 396.



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This bibliography is but a very small selection from the vast amount of extant writings about the Dead Sea Scrolls.





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